

Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

April 14, 1989 / 44th year of publication / No. 2161

South African Institute celebrates 25 years

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — The Institute for Reformational Studies (IRS), a South African centre for the study and promotion of a biblical Reformed outlook in all of life, has recently celebrated its 25th year.

Located at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, IRS is an interdisciplinary academic institute for research, teaching and community service. With roots in Dutch neo-Calvinism, it has cordial relations with the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. The anniversary celebrations in South Africa were attended by Dr. Albert Wolters of Redeemer College, who was an invited speaker.

Started as The Calvinist Foundation, IRS employs a staff of six who regularly organize international and interracial conferences which consider how the Christian faith can provide the foundation for educational and social activity.

It has a large publications program which includes the writing and distribution of currently 235 study

papers of 10 to 20 pages, 37 brochures of 20-50 pages, and 29 books, which are collections of talks and papers. Included are writings by Canadian and American Reformed scholars, some of which were presented as talks in South Africa.

Bridge builder

Director of the Institute is Dr. Bennie J. van der Walt, who spends 20 per cent of his time as Professor of Philosophy at Potchefstroom University. Van der Walt has a special interest in building bridges of understanding among the various racial groups of southern Africa, and in international co-operation.

He was founding editor in 1973 of a Xhosa-language periodical, and in 1975

See **CONFERENCE** — p. 2

Thinkbit

"Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

Elie Wiesel, accepting the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize

Christian students attend sundae school



Photo: Leonard LePage

Permission to reprint: The Standard, St. Catharines, Ont.

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — There are two things students can do when the late-winter blahs hit the school — sulk or celebrate. Beacon Christian High School decided to celebrate by filling a 24-metre (78.7-foot) gutter of aluminum foil with a giant sundae and by inviting senior students and staff members to come to the trough.

The sundae consisted of 30 litres (6.6 gallons) of chocolate, vanilla and strawberry ice cream, topped with 1.5 litres (52.8 ounces) of chocolate syrup, 2.5 kilograms (5.5 pounds) of whipped cream and a liberal sprinkling of chocolate chips.

The Bachanalian event accomplished more than simply an hour of fun. The local paper sent a photographer and placed the picture on its front page. Take note, promotional committees. Drop all your plans to acquaint the public with your deep philosophical statements and high moral principles. Try to get their attention first. The bushel that hides your light can sometimes be the proper and orderly routines that suggest that Christian schools never have fun.

Kingston prisoner licensed as preacher



Photo: Bert Witvoet

Dan Schut (l) presents a certificate to Ron Dube.

Bert Witvoet

KINGSTON, Ont. — Sometimes a preacher ends up being an inmate in jail, but how often does an inmate end up being a preacher in jail? It may have been a first ever in Canada when two weeks ago Ron Dube, an inmate in Collins Bay Institute, was licensed to be a preacher by the Conference of Congregationalist Churches in Canada (CCCC).

Some 40 inmates and guests witnessed on April 1 how a man sentenced to life imprisonment without parole received permission from his church to perform all the tasks of a minister of the gospel. And this, while he continues to serve his 25-year sentence, 11 years of which have passed.

On hand to present him with a certificate were John Flindall, chaplain of Collins Bay Institute; John Rice, a Kingston CCCC pastor who has ministered to Ron and other prisoners for several years; and Dan Schut, first vice-president of the CCCC.

Angry and restless

Ron Dube spoke briefly about his journey from a tough, "macho" young man to tough but sensitive Christian. Whatever it was that attracted him to the gospel meetings held in one of Canada's most austere prisons — Millhaven — it was certainly not the bland potion referred to as coffee, nor what he considered to be "the weakest bunch of people" he had ever set eyes on. Boredom and a certain restlessness had brought him to the meetings.

Fellow lifer Glenn Agnew, who has known Dube since he entered the Canadian prison system, remembers him as "a genuine street person with a lot of anger and hatred inside of him." But he adds: "He was searching for something, you could tell."

Ron remembers how he felt. "The last thing I needed around me was God." But one stark fact was beginning to make a dent in his armour. If he himself was in control, as he thought he was, how come he had landed himself a 25-year sentence?

"In 1980, chaplain Flindall introduced me to God," said Ron, "and in 1982, Pastor Rice introduced me to Jesus Christ." After hearing a lowly nun quote Romans 8:38, 39 on television, a text which emphasizes that nothing in creation can separate those whom God has chosen from the love that is in Christ Jesus, Ron surrendered his life to Christ. He realized he was in hell, he told the Collins Bay audience, and promised never to sin again. He kept his promise for half an hour.

Ron told the group that after his conversion he wanted to become a minister of the gospel, and that he was told by the Lord that his wish would come true on the seventh day of the seventh month of the seventh year. On July 7, 1987, Ron received a letter from the Conference of Congregationalist Churches in Canada telling him that he had been accepted as a candidate for the ministry. Years earlier he had received his Bible on January 17. On January 17 this year, the Conference approved his being licensed. Ron is greatly heartened by these numerical signs of God's faithfulness.

The significance of the whole day can be found in 1 Tim. 1:12-17, said Ron. It's a passage that speaks of the Lord's grace to one who was once "a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man."

Ron addressed the teachers in the audience, asking them to tell their students that prison does not make one an animal. "The suffering that goes on here is undeserved," he added. "God knows — a person is worthy to be loved."

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In this issue:

A Reformed Ecumenical Synod "consultation" indicates the tide may be turning in South Africa pp. 8-9
Harry Groenewold concludes his analysis of the Reformed community in Canada p. 10

Next week:

C.C.'s annual vacation issue

Conference on Christian schooling in South Africa



Speakers at South African conference on Christian Schooling include B.J. van der Walt (far left), John Van Dyk (centre rear) and Harro Van Brummelen (second from right).

... continued from page 1.

founded the substantial quarterly informational newsletter *Orientation*, which sends information on Christian higher education to 2000 addressed in 60 countries.

Van der Walt is chairman of the Christian Literature Committee for South Africa, a new literature project whose aim is "to provide books which explain the relevance of the Word of God for social, political, cultural and economic life in order to encourage Christians in Africa to become involved in the transformation of their

societies."

The committee wants to help Christians to "live responsible, integrated, holistic lives within their respective societies." It held a workshop in Zimbabwe in early 1989 for 19 people from six African nations, with half of the participants being black and half of them white.

A recent conference organized by IRS on "Christian Schooling" brought to South Africa Dr. Harro Van Brummelen of Trinity Western University and Dr. John Van Dyk of Dordt College, as well as a number of black and white speakers from

various countries in southern Africa. Topics included the role of schools in society, curriculum and learning, and distinctive Christian teaching.

Research at the Institute includes bibliographic studies related to John Calvin, studies of the impact of Calvinism in South Africa, a survey of the historical background and basic principles of Calvinism, and a study of the Christian idea of reform in the past and present.

In 1974 the Institute invited scholars from all over the world to a major conference on Christian higher education, and the speeches that were given were published in book form under the title *Christian Higher Education — the contemporary challenge*. That conference led to the formation of an international association of Christians in higher education which organized other international conferences, an association of which Dr. John Vander Stelt of Dordt College has been Executive Director.

Being licensed — a different way of doing time



Workshop setting in Collins Bay.

... continued from page 1.

He told his fellow inmates that becoming a Christian "does not get you outside the walls. Gain the freedom in here, then you will know what

to do with the freedom out there."

The importance of this event reaches beyond his own person, Ron told this reporter.

"Anyone who is doing time

becomes part of this," he said. "We have our own barbers and our own cooks, but when it comes to spirituality we are dependent on others. This event means that inmates in Collins Bay can have a heart-to-heart talk with someone who is part of the group."

Things won't change all that much for him, said Ron. "They still lock me up in my cell at 11 o'clock. It's just a different way of doing time."

A credible person

That different way is important to an inmate like Rodrigue Jean Louis. "I can see how Ron Dube is giving more of himself," he said. "Sometimes I have doubts and I wonder whether Dube is pulling for himself. But that is because of who I am. It's only recently that I have begun to understand my own selfishness."

Glen Agnew, who has spent 18 years in prison and sometimes despairs at the thought that his life "has been a total waste," says that Ron has inspired him to think that a man can do anything he sets his mind to. "Because of him, I know today what I want to accomplish."

Glen did not always like what Ron told him, he says. "He used to piss me off when he told me to stop feeling sorry for myself. But it's usually the truth. A wise man builds his house from the bricks that people throw at him."

According to Glen, Ron is

GUEST COLUMNIST

"Lift Up Your Heads": a meditation on being conquering Christians

Jack S. Hielema

In one of the churches I formerly served, next to the pulpit stands a large metal art creation. It portrays a figure with arms outstretched, head lifted up and a broken chain around its waist. Above the figure's head there is a fig branch spreading its leaves. Underneath this beautiful creation are the words of Luke 21:28-30: "When these [signs] take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. He told this parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the Kingdom of God is near.'"

To me this work of art was always a source of great encouragement and hope. In moments of loneliness or deep existential struggles I have stood before it in an empty church meditating on those words of scripture the artist symbolized.

Christianity is not simple, smooth or easy. Luke 21 and parallel passages speak about frightening things. The signs of which our Lord talks impress on us that the end of the age is drawing near. When Satan mobilizes his troops, when the powers of darkness are closing in on us, will there still be people, as Luke puts it, who "lift up their heads" and who know deeply and experientially: our redemption is drawing near? How strong will our faith be? How deeply is it rooted in Christ? How authentic is our relationship with God, with others and ourselves?

This kind of "soul-searching" is also going on in the lives of God's people in the Middle East. Many of these Christians feel inadequate to challenge the wisdom of the world by the wisdom of God. They are saints in Christ but they lack the knowledge to bring the rule of our Shepherd-King to all those areas that have not been touched by his transforming and uplifting power.

Huge assignment

It is a huge assignment. If you think this is easy I suggest that you ask those thousands of parents in the Middle East, where annual income is extremely low, and where Muslim leaders tempt youth in words like this: "You want a future that is financially secure? You want to be assured of a stable income, a good house, a proper spouse? Confess that Allah is God and that Mohammed is his prophet! Then all your struggles will be over! You will be enabled to face life unafraid!"

How are our Christian brothers and sisters to live in the midst of the religious fanaticism that is sweeping the Arab world? How are all of us to live? The words under that art work to which I referred give us the direction.

We are to lift up our heads as the children of Israel did when they looked up at the bronze snake on a pole (Numbers 21). Often I have heard pastors, elders, deacons and other believers in the Middle East praying and singing: "Though sin and hell are 'round us, Jesus will surround us." Christ, these struggling believers utter victoriously, is our fountainhead. Christ will pull us through this hellish world. Because of him we will not wear the mark of the beast, bow before his image or belong to his number (Rev. 15:2).

Living our faith may involve ridicule, being hated, losing friends and loved ones or being put to death by relatives (Luke 21:16), but Jesus reigns. The summer comes; God's whole creation will stand in the radiance of his glory. We are more than conquerors.

*O dearly, dearly has he loved,
and we must love him too,
and trust in his redeeming blood
and try his works to do.*

Jack Hielema is director of studies for the Middle East Reformed Fellowship.

a living demonstration of rivers of living waters flowing out of someone. "He always has something coming from him, in his highs and in his lows. I know every phoney three-dollar bill in the book," he says with conviction, "but I trust Ron. I would put my life, my deepest secrets before him. He gives credit to God. He does not

do it out of his own ego." Ron Dube accepted an ivory-coloured stole from Bert and Alice Witvoet. Although his ordination is still a year or two down the road, he is allowed to administer the eucharist and baptize new believers. He intends to pin buttons received from fellow prisoners on his clerical scarf.

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Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



sparring, trumped her with sanctions in response to America's oil import tax. All this friendly exchange takes place in the ring called "free trade." The cod war with France was settled in a much more gentlemanly way. A little give, and a little take and sant  — the affair is peacefully concluded — for three years, anyway.

The Newfoundland cucumber affair goes on and on. Now the ex-owner of the greenhouse is suing the Newfoundland government for \$261 million for giving away the technological secrets of his growing process. Some sources in that province regard the value of that process as being about equal to a \$100 pre-revolution share in Russian railways.

Immigration Minister Barbara McDougall needs \$100 million to conduct hearings of 120,000 refugee claimants. Why not forget about the \$100 million and let these people work and pay taxes? If there is anything this country needs besides a 25-cent chocolate bar it is more tax payers.

Mikhail Gorbachev did a bit of glasnost promotion in Havana, where bearded Fidel would have nothing of it. Fidel has yet to learn one of life's difficult lessons: it is not wise to kick your enemies in the shin, and it is stupid to do it to your friends.

Fidel Castro was not the only one to close the door to glasnost this week. Chinese Premier Li Pang announced this week that martial law would continue in Tibet's capital. Economically

China is not really doing all that well either. Western economists estimate the rate of inflation there at 30 per cent. The government has responded with the usual belt-tightening policies.

Are any buildings in Beirut still upright? If there are, it is a miracle after all the artillery duels between who knows which factions. Poor citizens of that beleaguered city!

The Persian Gulf is slowly returning to normal. Oil tankers are no longer threatened, and most countries have withdrawn their naval forces from the area. The U.S. fleet in the Gulf is now limited to 10 vessels.

The PLO's central committee has elected Arafat president of the yet unborn

Palestinian state, which places the countries of the world in a dilemma. Does Arafat merit a 21 gun salute? A red carpet? And who will sit beside him at state dinners? Weighty questions that cause overtime work in diplomatic circles.

Because of my age, I claim the right to write remarks in the margins of life, as I end each pressreview: some sermons will disperse a crowd faster than a fire hose. Other sermons are as likely to elicit a response as a falling feather will cause an echo in the Grand Canyon. And one more for this week: Old MacDonald has already lost his farm; the bank foreclosed. O.K. — one more then: nobody gets out of life alive.

Carl D. Tuyl is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ont.

Madame Sauve, who is not in the best of health, rode only the last kilometre in the traditional open horse-drawn carriage to Parliament Hill where she informed the legislature of Her Majesty's government's intentions for the coming session. Although the Speech from the Throne is only a cataract through which we see distorted reflections of the government's agenda, there was nevertheless a clearly visible intention to hold the line on spending. The deficit, totally eclipsed during the election campaign by the dust clouds of promises, became visible again as a full moon. You could not miss it. The deficit has to come down as we all know. Not all of us are in favour of the government's methods, which include such ugly things as increased taxes. It's time to zip shut the wallet, turn the loonie before spending it and darn socks.

After the traditional reception it was back to work for the House of Commons. Opposition leaders critiqued the throne speech, and the NDP moved an emergency debate on the environment which sent the House into overtime, without accomplishing anything. The opposition is not running on all cylinders: Ed Broadbent is a lame duck leader, and John Turner, whose political future is about as certain as penny stock on the Vancouver exchange, has to deal with a caucus that is as rebellious as the Haitian army. Both Paul Martin and Chretien can hardly wait for Turner to resign.

The Supreme Court met. Not the Ottawa red-robed one, but the Anglican one. The Court must decide about the legality of the new liturgical Book of Alternative Services. Some people fear indeed that their marriage solemnized with the new form is not really legal. Others worry whether priests ordained with the new forms are truly officially in office. You see, there is more to worry about than just oil spilled off Alaska's shore.

The Saskatchewan Liberal Party has a new leader: Lynda Haverstock, who did not waste any time in throwing knives in the direction of Turner's back by saying that supporters of the Meech Lake accord are yesterday's politicians.

The CBC is doing the Canada Post act. The strike goes on and on and on. We are

getting used to unfamiliar faces, unexpected pauses, and some fancy editing. One weatherman really went out on a limb, predicting 100 per cent probability of precipitation.

The Calgary Herald is not quite up on inclusive language yet. It reported that a certain Margaret Tutwiler was now the chief spokesman (!) for the U.S. State Department. On the other hand, if you want to know about oil there is no better source of information than the Calgary Herald. It noted that crude oil prices surged to their highest levels in 18 months as the Alaskan oil spill sparked worries about supplies in an already tight market.

Premier Getty, who lost his seat in Edmonton Whitemud, is following the old adage: if at first you don't succeed, try again. The Alberta Progressive Conservative Party has hired an American research firm to find a safe riding for Mr. Getty. The polling firm is conducting strawvotes in several rural ridings.

Carla Hills, the U.S. trade representative, had a little run-in with our feisty Minister of Trade John Crosbie. Carla threatened retaliation against regulations that protect Canada's West Coast fisheries. John, never one to back down from a little

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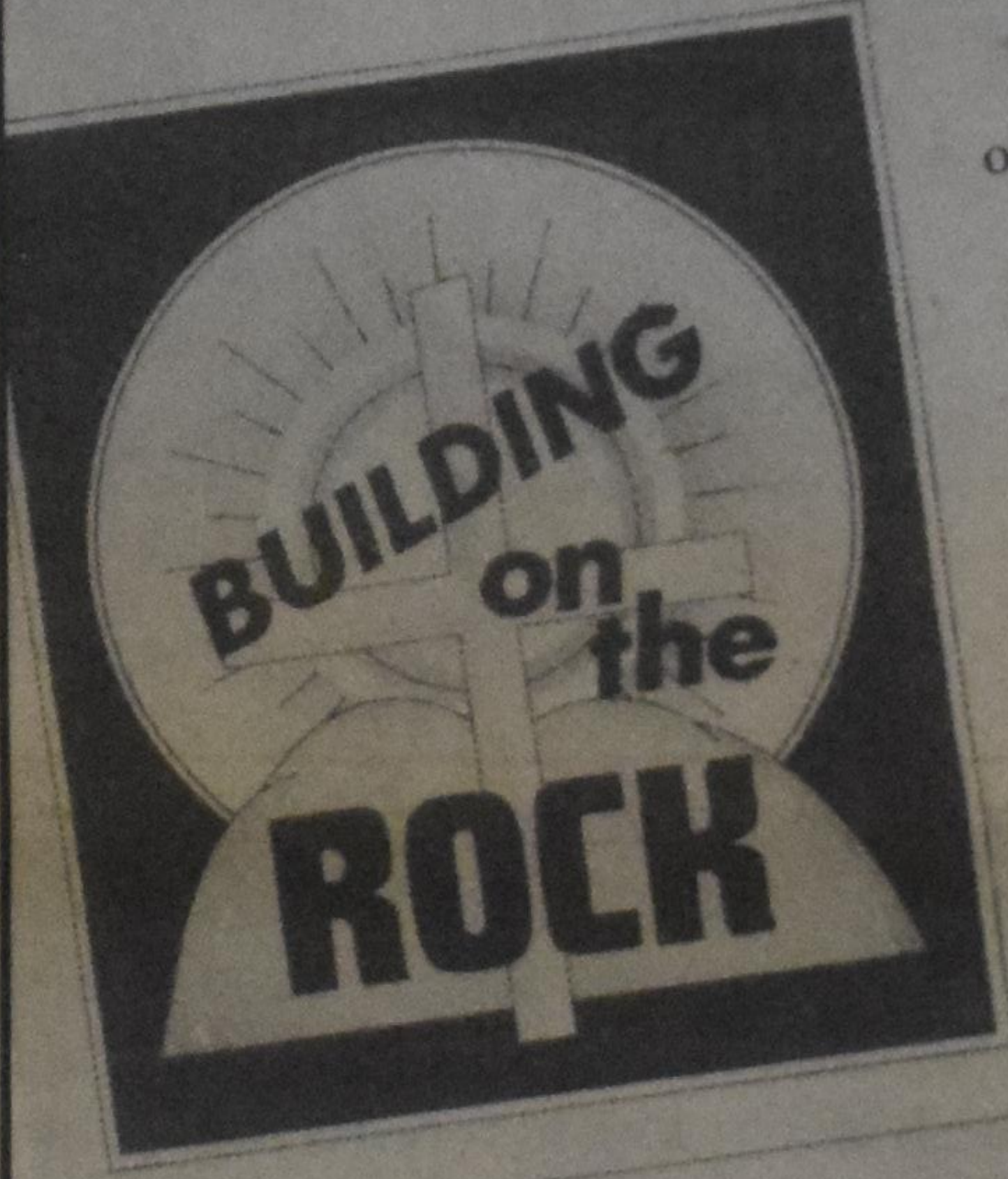


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Calvinist Contact: (ISSN0410-3882) is published by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1; Tel: (416) 682-8311 FAX: (416) 682-8313 Office hours: 8:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

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Canada mail: Second class mail registration #0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ontario. Postmaster: Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

U.S. mail: Calvinist Contact (USPS518-090), published weekly except for July 7, 21, Aug. 4, 11 and Dec. 29, by Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1. Second class postage paid at Lewiston, NY 14092. Send address changes to Calvinist Contact, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Advertising: Display advertising deadline is Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. of the preceding week. Classified advertising deadline is Thursday at 8:30 a.m. for the next week's issue. See classified pages.

The publication of comments, opinions, or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by either Calvinist Contact or Calvinist Contact Publishing Limited.

Printed in Canada.

Subscriptions:	Canada	United States
Six months	\$16.50	\$15.00 U.S.
One year	\$28.00	\$25.50 U.S.
Two years	\$53.50	\$48.50 U.S.
Three years	\$79.00	\$71.50 U.S.
Overseas:	\$105.00 airmail	\$50.00 surface mail

An independent Christian weekly that seeks to proclaim the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ.

Editorial

It takes a con to touch a con



Three "outsiders" present a licence to preach to inmate Ron Dube. (From l-r): John Rice, John Flindall, Dan Schut, Ron Dube.

Every time I enter Collins Bay prison, I have to remind myself that I am catching only a glimpse of what life in prison is like. After listening to the inmates, I learn about humiliation, isolation, distrust, lack of control, lack of opportunity, not to mention the institutional food which, according to reports, tastes like something that has been hung out to bleach.

Inside of the human beings subjected to these harsh conditions beat hearts that have a hard time thriving. It's like taking an already battered plant and placing it in the draftiest part of the greenhouse. There is no expectation of the plant ever flourishing again. Being close to the door has an advantage — the refuse pile is just outside the door should the miserable thing wither and die.

A strange thing happens when you place a number of individuals inside a prison. They develop a camaraderie of sorts that is often unspoken. They belong to a group of people that understand each other. Anyone else, however well-intentioned, cannot touch their heart strings the way a fellow inmate can.

Limited in-reach

This became evident to me again on April 1, when pastor John Rice, after Ron Dube had been licensed to minister to his fellow inmates, led a workshop on the theme "Going On." It centred around the three criminals that figure in the story of Jesus' trial and crucifixion — Barabbas, and the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus. As pastor Rice was talking about what it must have been like to be in prison awaiting the death sentence, one inmate leaned over to us and said, "What Rice is saying right now doesn't hit home with me. If Ron Dube was saying these things, it would touch me."

The casual comment made me realize again how important it is that people are ministered to by their own kind. John Rice's prison work has been excellent and has borne much fruit. It's the kind of work that needs to continue — people from the outside loving and serving those on the inside. But the fact that Ron Dube was licensed to minister to fellow inmates in prison acknowledges a phase in prison evangelism and ministry that is the most penetrating and effective way of spreading the good news. Ron and his band of Christian cons can be a leaven in a way that no outsider ever can

because they are part of the whole loaf of human suffering inside the Canadian prison system.

Always a choice

What people like John Rice, John Flindall, Fred Mills and John Walton do is bring the necessary outside perspective and stability to help with the transition from a victimized and victimizing mind to a victorious and nurturing mind.

It was this, in fact, that John Rice was doing when he explained the sequence of events in the lives of Barabbas, the two thieves and anyone of us who can identify with the criminal condition. He pointed first of all to the fact that a person reaps what he or she sows. "You are responsible for what you have done," he told us. How true. The worst insult we can give a human being is to take away his or her sense of responsibility. A person who is not held responsible for what he or she has done ceases to be treated as a human being.

But, added Rice, "I am where I am, because I have been where I have been." We understand how people get to where they are by looking at their early feelings of worthlessness and rejection. The sequence is often from rejection to pain to anger to hurt to rebellion to self-will to failure to hate to bitterness to robbery and theft to murder to revenge to hopelessness to suicide. Maybe not to suicide. Rice left six lines blank for each conferee to fill in for himself. God always gives us a choice. "I will set before you life and death ... now choose life." (Deut. 30:19, 20).

The seminar ended with the statement: "When one turns to God in a relationship with Jesus Christ, God takes away our desire to sin, not our ability to sin!!! As a Christian you can be tempted to sin, and you can fall. I know, I have many times. But get up, ask God for forgiveness and GO ON!!!!!"

Its their hell

This kind of "outsider's" perspective and encouragement is very healthy and necessary for prisoners to hear. The reason it communicates is that it carries a universal theme that is applicable inside and outside the walls. It really addresses the spiritual prison people are in long before they ever enter a Canadian penal institution. In that sense both inmates and guests were challenged.

But one is still reminded from time to time how an occasional visit to prison does not enable or entitle one to break through the walls dividing human experiences. I can say to Ron, Larry, John, Rod, Jimmy, Glen, Bill, Roman, Craig and all the other inmates I met, "we are one in the Lord" and mean it.

As long as I acknowledge the fact that I don't always understand their hell. God blessed me with a stable and loving family and community. I don't know what it's like to hate police, judges and guards. My view of the system is mostly from the top. It serves me better than it should. It puts them down more than they deserve.

Thank God there is Ron Dube to speak God's message and to break Christ's body in jail. And thank God that Jesus has no difficulty touching the hearts of prisoners. He experienced the underbelly of the justice system himself. He was accused, convicted and executed. When you think about it, Jesus was a con. And as such, he feels at home in Collins Bay and other prisons more than I ever will.

BW

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Hatred

Amos 5:15: "Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate."

I have often wondered how it is that God can hate. The oft-quoted text, "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated," cannot mean the kind of hate with which I have seen some people filled.

In its most pathological forms, the hatred I have sometimes observed has threatened to destroy every aspect of a person's thinking, feeling, dreaming, living. The hatred which may originally have been aroused by a specific person or event has become generalized to include many people and situations. What may have originated in fear, guilt, anger or disillusionment becomes an all-encompassing hatred of self, others, creation, one's God. It permeates relationships, activities, perceptions and goals. Out of control, such hatred consumes its bearer like a cancer that cannot be contained.

Dismantling such a hatred takes time, energy, love and great patience from a thick-skinned counsellor, therapist, minister, friend. What sometimes took 10 years to flourish into a debilitating hate, may take as many years to dismantle.

We're not immune

So why do I, at this point in time, discuss such hatred? Because I am afraid. I fear for the polarizations which drive us into our respective right- and left-wing corners; our pro- and anti-stances; our concern and greater concerns; the REAL versus the Liberated; the inclusive versus the exclusive. Inevitably, regardless of which "pole" one chooses, it is the other's stance which generates fear, anxiety, and sometimes hatred. More often than not, it is a hatred which threatens to consume rather than to be specifically directed at an evil.

There are plenty of evils at which we can direct our hatred. If we could marshal our hatreds to fight child abuse, dire poverty, abuses of power, prostitution, inequities in the marketplace, exploitation of the downtrodden, we would be combining our hatreds for the sake of the good, not be subject to a self-destructive uncontrollable hatred.

My theological experts tell me that the divine "hatred" of Esau was not such an all-consuming hatred but a rejection of Esau for the eventual lineage of Christ. Thus God put Esau aside in terms of his divine plan, but he did not sit about brooding as to how he might destroy him.

The destruction of evil we see in the book of Amos, where time and time again one reads: "For three transgressions of . . . , and for four, I will not revoke the punishment." In other words, the evils were specific, oft-repeated, unrepentant sinners' deeds. They were not the feelings, beliefs, values, of those who in the same faith community are at the opposing end of the spectrum of tolerance/intolerance, openmindedness/closedmindedness, liberal/conservative.

Forgive yourself and others

We cannot fear or abhor those who disagree with us when we confess the same Lord, salvation and human failings. We must continue to reach out to struggle together for the love of the good before the gulf between us becomes an unsurpassable chasm. To do that requires an ability to forgive ourselves as well as the others; to step down from our created altars of self-chosen "truths"; to walk humbly in the sight of our God.

Beating our swords into ploughshares is not merely an image for nations and the swords are not always those made of metal. We cut and attack with the sword of the pen more often than the sword of the battlefield. In contemporary terms it could be stated as: "Let us eradicate the computer virus from our divisive machines, to work and walk together and observe justice in our communities."

Alyce Oosterhuis-Horzelberg is assistant professor of education at The King's College, Edmonton.

Letters (more letters on page 6)

How to learn more about prisoners

In response to: "Appeal to Ron," a letter from Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet (C.C. Feb. 17), I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who have written to me with words of encouragement and offers of prayers. Also I am grateful for the many beautiful cards and pictures. What a wonderful experience to receive such expressions of friendship in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Some of you have requested information on how to become more involved with prisoners and how to develop a better understanding of those incarcerated. It is good of you to have done so, and I encourage others to also seek the answers to the many questions about the men, women and children locked away in our prisons.

To attempt such a journey into the pain of crime and its effects is one that should only be tried with the direction of God. Only God is capable of giving you the necessary strength, wisdom and courage to seek out the truth within prisoners and to share yourselves with them.

Those who have already written, who offered a helping hand and an open

heart, God has freed in a special way. Like so many others who are "called" to serve those behind prison walls, they will be blessed in many ways.

I wish to thank also *Calvinist Contact* for allowing me the opportunity to write about prisoners and their needs. With God's direction we can continue to develop our knowledge and feelings towards each other.

So far Canada Post has been quite accommodating and generous with those letters that have been improperly addressed. [One letter simply addressed "Ron Dube, Kingston jail" did reach Ron. Ed.] So I will include my full address for those of you who wish to ask any questions that I may be able to answer. Also this year's Gospelfest is quickly approaching, and if anyone wishes to attend, it will be necessary to contact me in the very near future so that I can forward your invitations.

May God bless your lives; I pray that he will continue to free us from the bonds of fear towards each other.

Ron Dube
Box 190
Kingston, Ont.
K7L 4V9

Cartoon mocks God

The venomous cartoon on page 5 of your March 17 issue, showing David as a little boy fighting Goliath, is a deadly attack on God's Word.

Let me examine what the Bible says in 1 Samuel 16. David was anointed from among his brothers as future king of Israel. From that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. In the next chapter we read that David was a full-grown man since he tried on Saul's tunic, a coat of armour and a bronze helmet. "I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them."

David went in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom Goliath had defiled, and he slew him.

Your paper in its religious humanism mocks and defiles God's Word, making the Bible look ridiculous.

We see in the cartoon on page 5 the envy of unbelief, the same battleground on which the Philistines fought the Israelites — religious humanism against the Bible.

God is not mocked.

Ed Numan
Smithers, B.C.

Response:

I admire your understanding of the Bible, but not your understanding of cartoons. When someone completely misinterprets a joke, one is placed in the unenviable position of having to explain it. But here goes.

If the cartoon pokes fun at anyone, it is not at God and not at David nor even at the Israelites, but rather, at the Philistines. They are the ones who make a rather ridiculous demand.

At a less literal level, the cartoon takes our modern situation in which no one who accomplishes a heroic feat can be trusted anymore, and transports it to a time when steroids were unknown. So, it's a comment on our time, not on David's.

I'm afraid you wasted your holy indignation on a non-issue.

Editor

Needs more witnesses

It is obvious that, judging by her articles in the March issues, Tini Van Ameyde has the ability of a master writer, which is an admirable gift indeed. But at the same time it brings

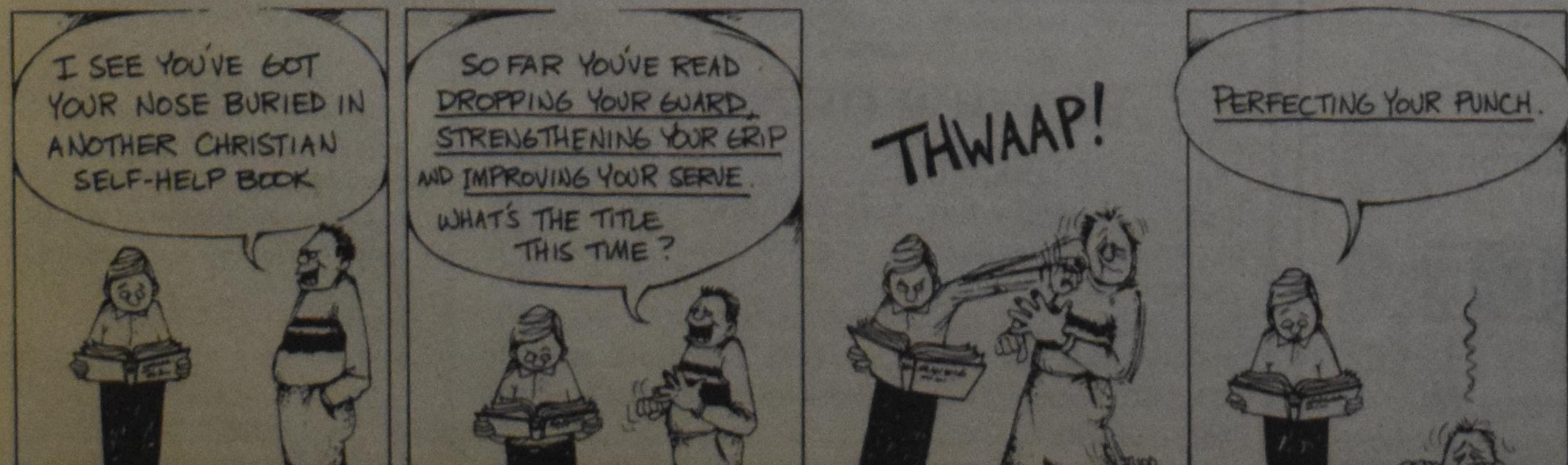
along with it responsibility.

By reading her articles, one can easily get the impression that during the times she was writing about, the saints were sitting in the pews while the sinners marched in from the council room. Maybe she is right, but so far, it's just one person's opinion. Without the confirmation of a few witnesses, not everyone will believe what she states as a matter of fact.

So, I do suggest that from now on, for the sake of truth and for the sake of winning the readers over to her side, her articles carry two or three signatures. By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand.

Engo Ennema
Townsend, Ont.

BEYOND BELIEF



Ring returned to owner

Thank you so much for placing the "lost and found" ad in C.C. It brought the desired result! The owner had lost her engagement ring in June 1988, on our church parking lot, and was thrilled to have it back.

Yesterday, I read "Whither

pilgrim; whither C.C.?" (March 17). It's a beautiful article, and I learned a lot from it.

May God richly bless all of you at the office to keep the C.C. going the way it is now.

Peta Velthuisen
Kemptville, Ont.

Two papers; two views

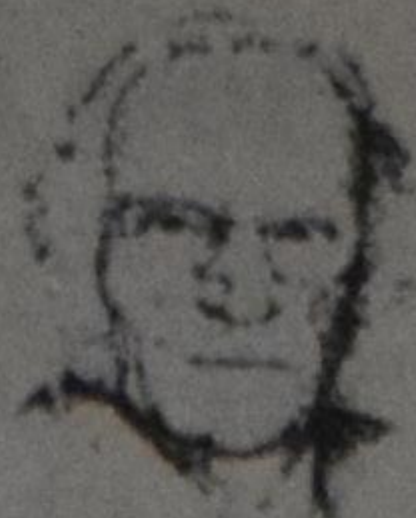
It happens often that we receive the *Financial Post* every Monday and *Calvinist Contact* much more erratically over the weekend. *Financial Post* is sent us since an affiliated magazine was bought up. Now they throw in this "capitalistic" weekly for an indefinite period for free with the original subscription.

C.C. and the *Financial Post* are in many ways such a

contrast in ideology, size, type of information and ways of describing, it often leads me to chuckle.

I do alternate perusing their sections, which I only partly understand, and reading your magazine. But do I come up with a balanced view or balanced information?

Anne Groenenberg
Chatham, Ont.



Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

The church should stay out of politics

Syrt Wolters

According to a letter I received from Rev. Arie G. Van Eek, executive secretary of the Council of Christian Reformed churches in Canada (CCRCC), some of the council's functions are:

- to monitor the government on legislative moves in areas that have impact on the Canadian family;
- to inform consistories/councils and members of Christian Reformed churches of these findings;
- to develop a responsible Reformed position on current public issues;
- to create strategy for the most effective witness to scriptural teaching;
- to carry out that witness by:
 - asking consistories to become involved;
 - asking classes to pass appropriate resolutions;

— directly alerting MPP's of the stand of the congregations of the CRC.

This entire list of "functions" has to do with the question: What is the proper relationship between the church and the world?

The Christian Reformed Church seems to have arrived at the conclusion that it has to assume a political role. I cannot accept this to be the proper task of the institutional church. I do believe that Jesus Christ, as the church-sovereign is the King of all culture. Not in the sense that the church itself is or should become a "culture state," or directly called to a cultural task. Such a church concept desecrates the church and in the end will kill it.

The church is called to be the "fireplace" around which the believers gather on the Lord's Day to be "re-charged" with power from above in order to

be able to distribute all the gifts of God's grace in ever-expanding areas in the world, setting the world ablaze in a glow of cultural obedience.

Proclaiming norms

The sole calling of the church, as the mother of all believers, is to give birth to its children, who in faith accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. The church is the only agency in the world which is able and called to proclaim "norms" for human life. The implementation of these norms rests with the people in the pew and not with consistories, councils or classes or whatever the denominational set-up.

This biblical concept of the Church puts a tremendous responsibility on the preacher and the church councils. It requires ministers who dare to "stick their necks out" in their preaching and elders who at family visits have the guts of faith to admonish in a loving way where there is a violation of Kingdom norms.

The CCRCC has assumed political responsibility, a responsibility which is not the church's. The church as institute should stay out of politics altogether. That responsibility belongs to the communion of believers, when they are "in the world." As long as the CCRCC keeps doing what it does, it will lull believers to sleep. Why should they take action if it is done for them? Instead of helping believers, it is paralyzing them!

No consensus?

Secular humanistic individualism has already crept into the church too much. There is no longer a communal consensus in most areas. When it comes to being "in the world" and not "of the world" there is no communal consensus in politics, neither in social relationships or education. The idea that public education can be as good or even better than Christian education is gaining momentum in Reformed circles.

What is the CCRCC going to do, when, in spite of all its action in regard to Sunday shopping, the Ontario bill is passed anyway? What then? Wouldn't it have been more in line with Jesus' Beatitudes, if from all pulpits across the nation the norms for the Lord's Day were proclaimed in such a way that believers would be mobilized to let the government know that such a bill would affect their freedom of religion? Of course, this will only have effect if believers are prepared to put their bread and butter on the line when it comes to their obedience to their King Jesus Christ! What do you think? Are we willing and prepared?

Syrt Wolters is a semi-retired barber who lives in Victoria, B.C.

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Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

New York Stories

Rated PG *****

Life Lessons

Stars Nick Nolte, Rosanna Arquette
Directed by Martin Scorsese

New York Stories consists of three separate 45-minute films by three of America's best-known directors. The films are very different but are held together, as their over-all title suggests, by their New York setting. All three, in diverse ways, are about obsessive people; and they are people whose identities have been firmly shaped by the huge, incessantly moving, endlessly tantalizing city in which they live.

Life Lessons is a serious work, a kind of psychological drama. Nick Nolte plays Lionel Dobie, a prominent artist

whose young assistant/lover leaves him. She must, finally, get out from under the sheer force of his frenetic personality.

Dobie is a driven man. He is obsessive about his art, his city, and the woman. Director Scorsese suggests that great artists are not great unless they need to do art — that need is an obsession that gets turned into energy.

But the very need which fuels Dobie's art destroys his ability to love. What he believes is "love" for his companion is really another form of his own neediness. And though his obsessiveness is a destructive force in his relationships, it's what he is used to, and so is the easiest way to be. So in the end,

we see him lay the foundation for yet another such relationship. He has enmeshed himself in a never-ending cycle.

Life Without Zoe

Stars Giancarlo Gionninni, Talia Shire
Directed by Francis Coppola

If, during the nearly 2½-hour screening of this trilogy, you feel the need for more popcorn or for the bathroom, you won't miss a thing if you answer that call during Francis Coppola's Life Without Zoe. This self-indulgent, juvenile fantasy is far inferior to the films which sandwich it.

The script, partially written by Coppola's 17-year-old (presumably not very mature) daughter, is supposed to be an affirmation of the nuclear family — a noble aim. Zoe is the 12-year-old precocious and irritating brat who lives with her butler in the ritzy Sherry Netherlands hotel while her flautist father and photographer mother globe-trot as required by their respective careers.

In the end, they decide to globe-trot as a family instead of separately. But these characters are so shallow and so far removed from the average North American lifestyle that we are never moved to like them, nor, consequently, care what they do or where they go.

As one critic has suggested, perhaps Coppola feels he has neglected his own daughter, so he has indulged her by letting her dream up this movie. Narrated by "Zoe," it does rather have the feel of a home movie, and a bad one at that.

Oedipus Wrecks

Stars Woody Allen, Mia Farrow, Julie Kavner
Written and directed by Woody Allen

Fortunately, Woody Allen's very funny Oedipus Wrecks lets viewers leave with the sour experience of Zoe behind them. Allen is in fine form, probing the neuroses of Jewish New Yorkers in the late 20th century.

If you are a Jewish New Yorker, that means you had to

have a Jewish mother. This film humourously supports the stereotypical characteristics of such a woman: overbearing, intrusive, and never satisfied with her children's accomplishments (while secretly proud of them). The title, of course, alludes to the Greek mythological character who kills his father so he can marry his mother.

Allen's character, Sheldon Mills (shortened from Millstein) is a wimp, plain and simple. And he and we know why — he simply can't escape his mother's suffocating influence. He wishes she would just disappear. When she does (in a scene we won't divulge) he at first experiences a crisis and then — bliss!

But, as with Lionel Dobie, Sheldon Mills is caught in an unbreakable cycle. He can't tolerate his mother but, despite himself, he can't escape going through life without a girl who is "just like the girl who married dear old Dad." That song, used as the movie's main theme music, takes on great comic irony and sums up Sheldon Mills' problem.

Viewers may want Sheldon to break out of his wimp mold, but it's simply impossible; he's an Oedipus wreck.



small talk Walking is good for the soul

Alice Los

Alice Los

It is said that walking is an excellent exercise which benefits body and mind. I'm afraid I don't do enough of it. Not that I haven't been taught right. My father, who has been walking all his life, thought nothing of walking his adolescent brood to see their grandmother who lived some 10 kilometres away! As a concession to some blisters he would let us take the streetcar for the return trip.

It's not that I don't enjoy walking either. Whenever I'm out on a country road, savouring the quiet and inhaling the fresh air, appreciating the rhythmic fall of my feet and the response of my body to the increased pulse of my blood, I always wonder why I don't allow myself this pleasure more often.

Of course, I know the answer. It's because I'm usually convinced that I have better things to do. At times that may be true but then again, when I consider what can be packed into an hour's walk, alone or with a companion, I'm not so sure.

First of all, there's the exercise of many muscles, among which the heart ranks foremost. Surely a mechanism as fearfully and wonderfully made as the human body deserves time and effort to be maintained in the best possible condition!

Secondly, there's the soothing of the mind as that which preoccupied it makes room for wonder about the funny shape of a tree or about the people who may have lived in an abandoned farmhouse.

Promoting good communication
Walking is also good for the soul. It's an

excellent opportunity to practise the literal dimension of the biblical concept of walking with God. There's nothing like a vast expanse of sky to trigger a burst of praise from the heart, nothing like a majestic fir which draws the eye upward to give thanks for a million things.

And there's nothing like the silence on a farmer's field to start a conversation with God about children, the church, unpaid bills or a difficult father-in-law. I sometimes think of Enoch, "who walked with God and was no more." I'm sure he spoke with the Lord while he planted his garden or built a shed or did whatever it was in which he was involved. At times he must have been listening intently, too. That's what walking together does; it promotes good communication. It's why parent and child, husband and wife ought to go for walks more often.

"Enoch walked with God and was no more." This was an exception. The rule still is that all walkers with God will die one day. But when they arrive in the valley they won't be alone. Their longtime Companion will continue on with them and hand them the staff of his grace on which to lean. Yes, being able to go for a brisk walk on two good legs is great. Walking through life with God is greater by far. It can be done in a wheelchair, on a sickbed, in the classroom, on the job and at a wedding. It's an excellent exercise to gain spiritual strength. For best results, daily workouts are mandatory.

Alice Los lives in Invermay, Ont.

Wildlife Week is April 9-15

Marian Van Til

OTTAWA — "In most parts of Canada, wildlife is under siege," say Canadian Wildlife Associates. Another group, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada has evidence that 147 species of wild plants and animals in Canada are "vulnerable," meaning they may not survive extinction if we don't right past ecological wrongs. Sixteen known species are already gone forever.

Concerned Canadians may want to throw up their hands in despair, but there are solutions, and one of the first is to widely publicize the situation and what is being and can be done.

One way to do that is via National Wildlife Week, first legislated by an act of parliament in 1947. Despite that, widespread efforts to stop the ravaging of our environment and, thus, to save the animals which belong in it, are just beginning, note environmental groups.

Please note: Next week, in its annual Vacation Issue, Calvinist Contact will focus on details of this situation and efforts being made to become "good stewards" of the Earth — a phrase used increasingly by non-Christians to describe the kind of relationship humankind should have to the Earth and all it contains.

Izaak de Rijke, B.Sc., LL.B., O.L.S.
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Feature

Two worlds in one church



Delegates at the consultation at Vereeniging in South Africa. (From l-r): Paul Schrottenboer (REC), Klaas Runia (Reformed Churches of the Netherlands), Dick Hattingk and Johan Heyns (DRC).

Paul G. Schrottenboer

Seldom does one experience such a high and a low in quick succession as some of us did at the consultation held in Vereeniging, South Africa, in early March. The consultation had been arranged by the Interim Committee of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) at the request of the REC assembly held in Harare in 1988.

The first day of the consultation was filled with expressions of agreement not heard in Dutch Reformed circles in decades, agreement between black and white, agreement between churches in South Africa and in the front line states from which the younger churches sent delegates. It was a day of euphoria. The press, both English and Afrikaner, made front page news of it. The international news networks picked it up and told people overseas.

The euphoria was caused by

statements of delegates of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa (DRC) in which they openly admitted that apartheid is a sin, that the DRC had a hand in its erection, and worse, had sought to give it a theological basis. Now they said that apartheid should be considered a sin and that the justification of it must be considered heresy, in conflict with scripture. That made news.

This message found immediate and positive response from the black churches. They were all

represented, 10 denominations in all, comprising well over two million people. They said that they had never heard anything quite like it before. A new structure of unity had been erected. One black leader said that perhaps the consultation could adjourn a day or two early, for the agreement was so extensive.

But on the second day, all the wormwoods of discord bored away at the delicate structure that had been erected. By noon it appeared that there was little left but sawdust. The apparent consensus had broken apart when the DRC delegation presented a statement which was generally seen as a rejection of the position they had expressed orally the day before. Every black delegate expressed dismay. Some said that they felt betrayed.

of several people. Two worlds in one church.

These were worlds of experience, of outlook upon society, of response to the all-pervasive social structure and ideology of apartheid. Some lived on the top side, and others lived on the underside. As Johan Heyns, moderator of the DRC expressed it, the tragedy is that these two worlds been created by apartheid. The gulf is so great that we have difficulty speaking across the divide from one world to the other. The existence of the two worlds became apparent in the use of definitions. A spokesperson for the blacks said that they were tired of hearing about definitions of apartheid, for apartheid is not this or that, but is a totalitarian system. A spokesperson for the whites said in response that they could not think or communicate without using definitions.

The church of Christ speaks the language of faith, faith that is founded upon and honed by the biblical message. But one's understanding of the gospel, even when it is understood in the frame of the Reformed tradition, is co-determined by the life context in which one lives.

The question at Vereeniging (Unionville) was: Is there a sufficient common basis in faith and in the one church of Jesus Christ to speak in an understandable and reconciling way from one world of experience to another? If that should prove impossible, then considerable rethinking will have to be done concerning the universality of the Christian faith and the oneness of the church. Some of that rethinking, we can report,

was done at Vereeniging.

When on the afternoon of the second day the baffled delegates of the DRC came to the REC interim committee to ask for advice, they were told that they should simply withdraw their statement, for it had proved to be the cause of misunderstanding and strife.

This they did.

Silent rejection

The withdrawal, although it did have some good effect, did not entirely clear the air. Since it was now time to proceed with the business, a motion that outrightly rejected apartheid was put forth by Alan Boesak; it was considered and adopted. But in the discussion on this motion the DRC delegates neither spoke nor voted, except that one indicated that he wished that his negative vote would be recorded.

In unmincing words, the consultation declared:

We say clearly and unequivocally that we regard apartheid in all its forms as a sin, as contrary to and irreconcilable with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We agree that apartheid in all its forms cannot be reformed, but must be totally eradicated from the life of the South African nation and church.

In the light of this, we commit ourselves to work together towards the dismantling of apartheid. Therefore we believe that all discriminatory and unjust laws should be abolished, especially the Land Act, the Group Areas Act, Separate Amenities Act and the Population Registration Act.

It was generally felt, and by no one more deeply than the chairperson of the consultation, Rev. Clarence Boomsma, that the consultation could not end on this unsatisfactory note. There was much more common ground than would appear from what had at that point been decided.

In a number of moves made in the evening hours and early in the morning, Dr. Beyers Naudé, a (white) delegate of the black Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, at the request of the REC interim committee did a bit of shuttle diplomacy, speaking in turn with Heyns, Boesak and Prof. Foston Sakala of the Reformed Church of Zambia. Naudé suggested how a way might be found to express the measure of agreement without covering up the deep differences.

On the last day of the conference, Boomsma first gave Heyns the opportunity to speak. In emotion-laden words Heyns said, "The tragedy of apartheid is that it has created separate worlds. We are born

Continued on page 9...

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Only one kind of apartheid

The point of dispute was the DRC statement in which they rejected all *discriminatory* apartheid. The question of the blacks then was: But what other apartheid is there? We know only one kind and it is totalitarian. Efforts by the DRC delegates to convince the consultation that they did not intend to take back one word of what they had expressed orally on the previous day did not convince nor placate the blacks.

As the consultation progressed it became apparent that there had been a breakdown in communication. It was not primarily a language barrier, but it was a barrier that could be described only as a difference in worlds in which people lived. And so the term "two worlds" sprang to the lips

... continued from page 8.
and raised and live in these separate worlds. Yesterday there came a ray of hope when the possibility came to the fore that these two worlds could become one world of hope and peaceful coexistence. But according to the responses to our statement, it became apparent that what was my experience could not be yours.

"Then came the dreadful reality from our side, from our world, as we tried to formulate in writing a framework of our speeches of what we had said orally. At that point another world of experience showed that it, too, is a dreadful reality. In the spirit of yesterday I think we should go on and try to find one another in order to make one world of hope and peaceful coexistence. Is that possible? To help in bridging the gap, I withdrew the statement earlier."

Forgiving sins of the past

Heyns then asked that a statement proposed by the blacks but not yet acted upon be considered. This statement, which became part of the proceedings of the consultation, read as follows:

We have heard from the representatives of the DRC repeated confessions of guilt with regard to the establishment, maintenance and justification of apartheid. We have heard their plea for forgiveness. We too confess that we have not always been willing to speak out clearly enough against apartheid through fear. We now respond by reaching out in forgiveness and brotherhood and assure our brothers from the white DRC that, well aware of our own weakness and sin, we do not intend to hold the past against them, but together seek another way forward to find God's will for all of us.

Boesak responded to the words of Heyns by saying that in a situation such as this, one has to grapple with emotions.

"We speak easily of the need

for change," he said. "What we find difficult to talk about is the sharing of the pain. In this consultation we have experienced something of this sharing, but can we really cope with all these emotions? For many there will be cynicism or an inability to understand. We are called to do more than to respond in an easygoing way. I see something here of the cost of Christian discipleship. We are not here to score political points, nor to make sure that others know what it feels like to experience apartheid from the underside. Having heard Johan Heyns, I agree that we should consider the statement earlier set aside."

When Naude spoke, he thanked both Heyns and Boesak for what they had said, and observed that both of them were taking risks in what they were saying (Heyns for conceding too much guilt and Boesak for not demanding more from the DRC). He suggested that an enlarged drafting committee be formed, with a representative of each church, and two from the DRC and two from the interim committee. Sakala agreed. Later, the drafting committee submitted its report which contains as an appendix a second statement from the DRC. This was adopted as the statement of the consultation.

The tide has turned

The tide turned three years ago in the white DRC in 1986 when its general synod adopted a document, "Church and Society." At that time it admitted complicity in the origin of apartheid and acknowledged that this was a mistake. But in the mind of many in Vereeniging this did not go far enough. Nor, for that matter, did the entire DRC agree with it. For many members, the 1986 document went too far and some 30,000 people left the church to found a new denomination for Afrikaners only.

In the June 1988 meeting in Harare, the DRC delegates

went somewhat beyond the Cape Town document in the admission of guilt. And at Vereeniging they went even farther. Now they said:

We declare that, since any ideology speaks decisively above and alongside the truth of the Bible, the ideology of apartheid is a political and social system whereby human dignity is adversely affected, and whereby one particular ethnic group is detrimentally oppressed by another and cannot be accepted on Christian ethical grounds, because it contravened the very essence of reconciliation, neighbourly love and righteousness, the unity and inevitably the human dignity, of all involved and is therefore a sin. Any teaching of the church that would defend this ideology would have to be regarded as heretical, that is, in conflict with the teaching of scripture.

It is interesting to note that this statement is entirely in line with the 1984 Chicago statement of the RES, a statement which the DRC delegation then found so unacceptable that it suspended membership in the RES. Can anyone doubt that the tide has turned?

We all know that when the tide comes in it does so in stages; it progress is sometimes hardly perceptible. But each wave is always a bit longer than the preceding one. So too with the white DRC.

Some treading water

During the week following the consultation at Vereeniging, the plenary executive (ASK) of the DRC met in its bi-annual session. On its agenda was the report of the consultation. Rev. Boomsma addressed the meeting, asking delegates to stand with their delegation in the furtherance of a deeper unity with the entire church family. He was only partly successful.

In its statement to the press, the plenary executive, while expressing much appreciation for the consultation, said that it could not fully support the statement of its delegation. On the important paragraph reproduced above, the executive said that it must be seen in the light of the Cape Town document, "Church and Society."

This means that it toned down the expression of guilt. It also stated that it could not agree with the decision of the consultation on church unity, namely that, "We pledge ourselves to become one, united, non-racial Reformed Church in Southern and Central Africa" because the DRC "is not yet ready to say what the structural model of the one-church-to-be will be." The Cape Town document, with its deficiencies, remains the official stand of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Yet the tide has turned. The ASK appointed a committee of four members to prepare a report to the general synod of 1990 on the work of the

consultation. If as much progress will be made in 1990 as in 1986, the chasm between the two worlds created by apartheid will be greatly narrowed.

Not only has there been a turning of the tide in the DRC, but in an important government study in the future of the Republic of South Africa. A government commission has just released an extensive and very important report on a bill of human rights for South Africa. If it were adopted, the end of apartheid would not be far off. We hope to report on the proposed bill of human rights in a following issue.

Paul G. Schreijer is the past general secretary of the Reformed Ecumenical Council. He lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.

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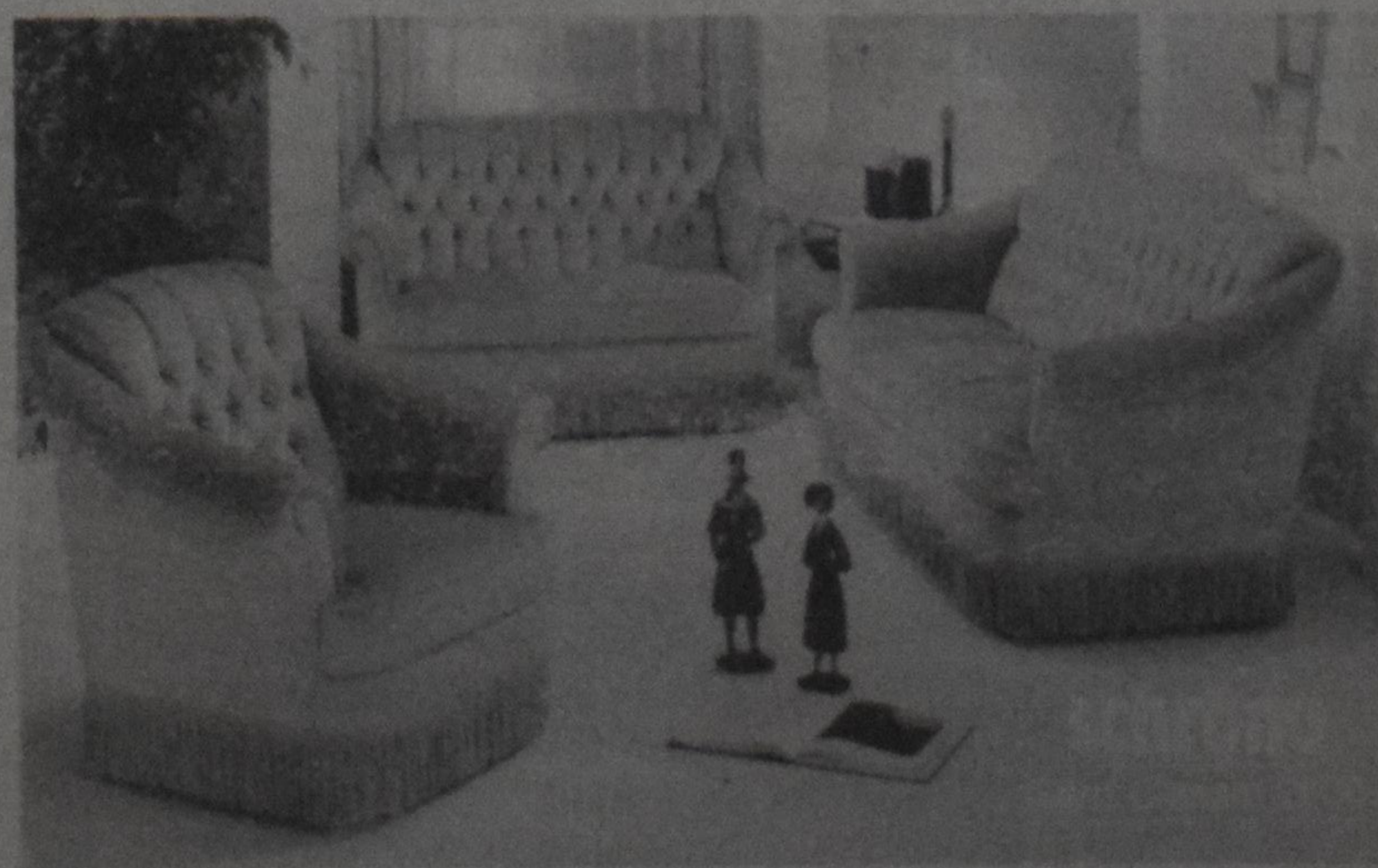
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Features

A vision lost?

Harry J. Groenewold

The time has come for the Reformed faith community to assess its inheritance and its ongoing cultural task in Canada. Gone are the exciting days of earlier decades when local communities, driven by a zealous Kingdom vision, built churches and schools and became involved in labour, politics and other cultural activities.

Since those heady days, the Reformed community has lost its sense of direction, the urgency of its task and the meaning of its calling. Resting on past accomplishments, the zeal and fervour is no longer evident in the personal lives of its members nor in its communal activities. Its distinctive, reformational voice is merely a hoarse whisper, heard occasionally, and with increasing consternation, from a pulpit here, a church committee there, or in a classroom somewhere else.

Looking at today's Reformed community we must be truly concerned for its future prospects. Are we using existing cultural institutions, such as church and school, to strengthen the defences of a religious ghetto or as a means to pursue an uncritical ecumenical Christianity? Will the original and authentic vision live in the hearts and lives of the next generation or is the Reformed community sloughing off unwanted and uncomfortable tasks and responsibilities in significant cultural areas? Does the Reformed community and its cultural institutions still have a God-given task in years to come? Or is that community extending to the next generation the withered, skeletal hand of Calvinist doctrinal orthodoxy?

These painful but urgent questions arise out of an intuitive awareness that an alarming erosion of the Reformed heritage and vision has taken place. The distinctive reformational voice of the 1950s and 1960s is no more. A scattered remnant speaks in muted tones about what ought to be and, more often, of what might have been. Many adherents admit to a sense of defeat and futility. The majority of the clergy limit their concerns to theological and ecclesiastical matters; the teaching profession in Christian education scrambles for respectability and conformity; and weakened Christian organizations seek social relevance and the always elusive fiscal support of a dwindling minority.

Am I blaming the leadership for the weakening of the vision in the Reformed faith community? Not entirely. The leadership is responding to the changing dynamic and character of the community, a community no longer of one mind or sharing a common vision.

Fragments and factions pursue a variety of religious options and experiences ranging from a personal pietism to rigid fundamentalism. Many members, wishing to be involved in the world of success, no longer want to be

"stigmatized" as Reformed Christians. They avoid the phrase on grounds that it is exclusive language and, therefore, an offense to people. If it is to be used at all, it must refer only to a particular ecclesiastical institution — the Christian Reformed Church.

Others, in the name of Christian openness, insist that the Reformed community adopt the ecumenical language of Canadian culture. A faith community must not cling to its peculiar past; it must be "creative" in a new religious and cultural environment. Only in reaching out can the Reformed community avoid "the greenhouse effect" brought about by religious and cultural isolationism.

Democratized faith

Of course, there is a great deal of truth in the expressed concerns about isolationism. But is the solution to be an undefined ecumenicity or interdenominationalism? What do these terms mean? Who sets the limits, boundaries, and gives content to these terms?

The careless use of these words and the unwillingness to test underlying assumptions will inevitably lead to an impoverishing of the leadership within the Reformed community of faith. All too often these words are used to proclaim an open Christianity, open to a diversity of subjective Christian opinions, that is, democratized Christianity in which all are of equal value — or of no value at all. A democratized Christian faith community resists authoritative claims and seriously threatens the integrity of scripture.

The proponents of an open or ecumenical Christianity tend to be issue-oriented, having little patience with dogma or with a normative approach to problems. The issues — whether poverty, the Third World, nuclear arms, labour strife or social programs — tend to determine support or opposition.

The greatest danger in such an approach is to accept the cultural agenda of a secular society in the vain hope that such ecumenical support guarantees cultural relevance.

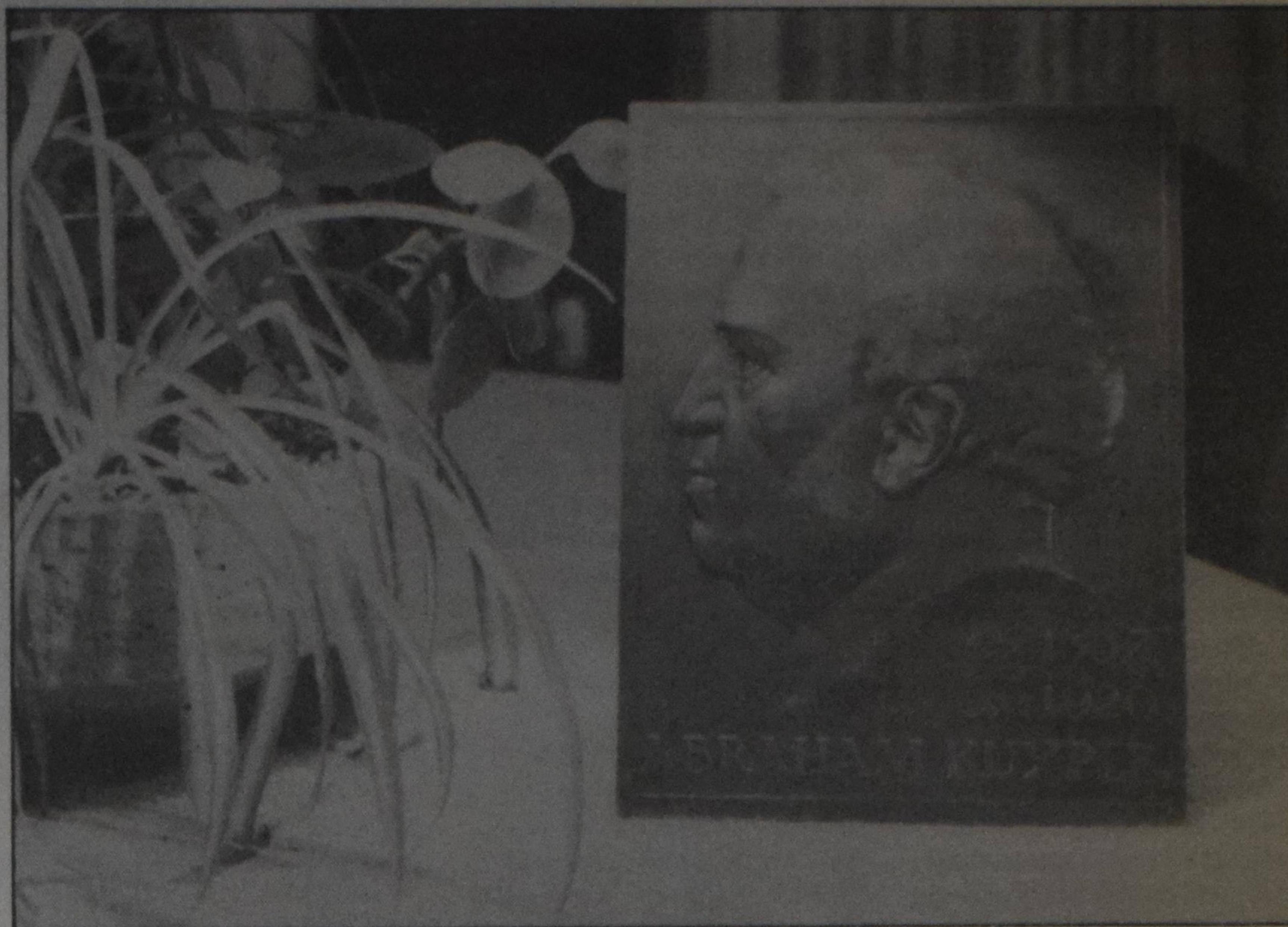


Photo: Bert Witvoet

"Gone are the exciting days of earlier decades."

The consequence of such an ecumenical approach is an ongoing socio-ethical crusade in support of the latest topical ideology and movement. Crusades tolerate no opposition or a questioning reservation. This kind of "movementism" doubts the effectiveness of God's rule on earth; his rule must bend and conform to an activist cultural agenda.

The pursuit for cultural acceptance is not limited to those who advocate a more ecumenical approach to social issues; it applies with equal force to the conservative element of the Reformed community which seeks to reap the material benefits of a Canadian culture while, at the same time, standing watch on the walls of Reformed orthodoxy.

Cultural relativism on both sides

The conservative element accepts, and often embraces, the cultural status quo. It rejects cultural involvement and uses its heritage for purposes of ecclesiastical security: "The church has no business speaking out on social issues; and Christian organizations can never be mandated to speak on behalf of the church." Most conservatives are quite content to limit their cultural commitment to education — the extension of home and church.

Ironically, both positions, the advocates of ecumenicity and the defenders of orthodoxy, contribute significantly to an attitude of cultural relativism: a willingness to accept a variety of faith positions. The clergy are in a no-win situation: the ecumenically minded will dismiss the clergy as conservative, if not reactionary; the conservative majority will condemn the

same clergy for their unsettling, if not subversive, leadership. In such a polarized environment, Christian personalism, guided and informed by self-perceived inner illumination will become increasingly influential.

One can only conclude that, if the Reformed faith community persists on its present course, it will have abandoned its heritage and its *raison d'être* will evaporate. By the end of another generation the Reformed community will have joined the ranks of fundamentalist Christianity and will adopt the latter's paranoia about cultural decadence and decline. There will be a flight to the theological catacombs and bunkers, to defend an increasingly threadbare orthodoxy.

The drift of the Reformed community reveals a loss of awareness of historical place and task in the world, as well as a misreading of the cultural dynamic shaping contemporary society. The Reformed community must recognize that the people of God live in an age of creedal anarchy, in an age without vision or direction.

The times are no longer sympathetic towards a culturally relevant Christian faith. And it is naive to believe that there is still a cultural and moral order understood and accepted by society as a whole. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the Christian faith has ceased to be life-informing for the overwhelming majority of Canadians.

The Reformed heritage — used in its broadest historic sense — is one of the few religious traditions capable of being a positive cultural witness. Many of its members are still deeply committed to that faith and heritage. But they have become confused and bewildered by the raucous shouts of overzealous factions, each claiming to be the

authentic voice of the whole. The silenced members are in search of leaders, in search of an authoritative faith based on a sound confessional orthodoxy with clearly defined boundaries.

It is to these members that a renewed leadership, imbued with reformational insight must address itself. This leadership must be prepared to accept the loss of members who refuse to accept a distinctively Reformed understanding of faith and of cultural task. It must reject out of hand the spurious charge that the Reformed tradition merely perpetuates a parochial and ethnic way of life so alien to an Anglo-Saxon culture. The leadership must, with great sensitivity to biblical teachings, spell out uncompromisingly, the full implications of God's command: Serve me! The great theme of God's revealed word — Creation, Fall, Redemption — must again become the foundation the framework of the Christian community.

Know history and current society

The Reformed faith community must also be intimately acquainted with Canadian history and contemporary culture. It must learn to test the spirits now shaping and directing culture without casting back nostalgic glances to the "golden days" when everything seemed so much clearer and easier. Having a sensitive understanding of its cultural place in Canada, the Reformed community will quickly realize that it must be a *distinct* and *life-informing* presence. Such a presence rests on several assumptions and strategies.

The Reformed faith community must:

- see itself as an organic community;
- allow the preaching and teaching church to be the

The springtime of life

Gertie Wagenaar

Spring is such a fascinating time. At home in our backyard grows a huge maple tree. In winter, it is almost ugly; it is so bare and looks absolutely dead. But I follow the miracle of spring by watching that tree come to life!

From my kitchen window I can see it's branches. One morning I will think: is it true that little buds are appearing? The next morning I am quite sure that life is beginning again and from then on it's an on-going process. I would not like to be away from home in April because I want to witness this miracle. Like the rainbow, it is a sign that once again the promise of the different seasons is being fulfilled.

I like to think that springtime has always been an important part of my life, of my family's life way back when I was a young girl. After a long winter that large family — nine boys and five girls — was almost bursting out of its home; how great it felt when windows and doors could be left wide open and so suggest more space and a lot of things, such as laundry, could be done outside.

We children had a special kind of mother who was very strong, physically and mentally. She could handle most situations, though I am sure that she must have experienced some very desperate moments. None of us were ever seriously ill but I do remember six of us having the measles at the same time ... six having a fever, six wanting a drink and mother trying to run a store at the same time!

But my parents never lost a child. Is this not the greatest blessing parents can experience? One of the greatest anyway. My father used to say that the greatest would be having all his children become God-fearing children. Now that I am old myself, I think he was right.

My mother sewed all our clothes, most of them from clothes handed down from cousins. When we were old enough, we had to take apart the seams of the garments. Mother would then wash the pieces, turn them inside out if that was suitable, cut out what she wanted, and voila! In no time, or so it seemed to us, there would be a new garment.

My brothers went through lots of pants. They must have been a great strain on our

parent's budget. Taking into consideration their antics, climbing the highest trees and rooftops, one would not find it hard to believe that they had directly descended from monkeys. Once, one of my brothers climbed the church steeple and waved to his compatriots below who were shouting their approval. The village women, shaking their heads as they passed, no doubt felt sorry for our parents who had produced such adventurous offspring. But later that night, the misdeeds forgotten, their sons' backsides a little sore, our parents would regard their sleeping offspring as angels.

We were pretty good students I think. Teachers did not complain about our work, anyway. But sometimes they would talk to Dad about some mischief performed by one of us. Dad refused to punish us at home for what we had done in school; he only talked to us about it. Punishment for wrongs at school, he said, was the teacher's department. He would tell teachers: "You have my permission and I trust your judgment." That was quite something, for some teachers did get carried away. They, too, are human and some had tempers.

Egging each other on

As nice as springtime could be, it could also be a very trying time. The birds would make their nests and lay their eggs and the latter were coveted items. We never tasted eggs otherwise and we all loved them. Our dad too was an avid "egg searcher." My brothers

would get long wooden poles from the rafters in our old garage. These poles had a solid block of wood attached to one end to prevent them from going too deep into the mud bottom of the creek. Creeks sectioned off various pieces of land and with the aid of these poles, the boys could go from field to field. My brothers never hesitated long to conquer the widest creek. But sometimes they misjudged the distance and then they would get a soaker. Everybody would think this hilarious and the egg search would promptly be abandoned to accompany the victim home. On the way, they would sing, informing everyone about who had fallen into the water.

As soon as those of us at home could hear the singers coming, Mother would scurry around to find dry clothes. Today's children have so many clothes that they demand to wear something different every day! Not so when we were young. We often had to share, and I have known it to happen that some children had to stay in bed for awhile until clothes had been washed — by hand — and dried in the sun.

My brothers had a love of water, almost a kinship. Of course, we were surrounded by it. The boys could usually swim before our parents even realized that they were trying to master the art. They did not own swimming trunks nor beach towels. They swam in the suit in which they were born and, it was hoped, the sun would dry them. Failing that, underwear would become towels. It was when my brothers became careless and put their underwear on inside out that mother would get suspicious. Then they would have to wait until Dad had time to go with them to a secluded place. Something he did from time to time, taking the youngest child on his back.

We girls were wise enough not to try and learn to swim by ourselves. That was definitely a no-no and we knew that without being told. Later, during the war, when I was well into my teens, I did learn to swim. A swimming instructor from a big city was hiding in our village from the Germans and he taught a group of us girls and some neighbourhood women how to swim. He had a huge fishing rod onto which he fastened a rope, the end of which he put around the student's waist to guide and hold her as she tried to swim. It did not take us long to catch on. Strangely enough, our mothers approved of this. Did they realize that we needed some fun amid the troubles and stress of the war? An afternoon splashing away in the canal did just that!

It was a wonderful feeling to



Photo: C.C. files

have conquered the water, of which I had always been fearful. As a small child, I had fallen into a canal one afternoon. I still remember the panic I felt. I remember seeing the reeds, whose plumes we had tried to pick, go down into the mud. I was pulled out and revived, but to this day I still do not dare to swim where I cannot also walk.

Foreach day, a task

Thinking back on days gone by seems to bring them closer to me. Many events have been forgotten, but many come to mind time and again. As it was a Saturday when I wrote all this down, I am reminded of what Saturdays were like when I was young. Where Fridays were the day when the inside of the house was cleaned, Saturday mornings were spent washing the outside windows and scrubbing the brick walkway in front of the house. In the afternoon, we prepared the food for Sunday. Nothing was left for Sunday that could be done on Saturday. My dad shaved on Saturday evening, never on Sunday. Potatoes were peeled and vegetables cooked, the meat also if there was any. In the fall there was often the delicious smell of pears cooking slowly on the fire. What feasts we had!

Saturday was also bath time. This meant that we took turns going upstairs with a pail of hot water — no luxuries like bath tubs and showers back then. After supper it was time for the young ones to bath. In winter, that was done right in the middle of the living room, as that was the only heated room. But in the summer we used the back kitchen or even the outdoors. Bathing the young children was done almost in an assembly line fashion: one parent washed, the other dried; one of the girls put on pyjamas and another clipped nails and combed hair; then into bed with them.

Bundles of dirty clothes were put to soak in tubs filled with

water carried in from outdoors. When I had to quit high school in order to help my mother, all that laundry was to become my weekly nightmare. But that was Monday's worry. This was still Saturday evening and Saturday evening meant going to the library with Dad.

Books played an important role in our lives. Not having television, we did a lot of reading. When we were old enough we were allowed to go by ourselves. Of course there was a set curfew by which we had to be home. On these outings, we would also meet the opposite sex, which was a lot of fun. We would always congregate in the middle of the village near a large green hydro pole. The boys would buy peanuts by the pound and share them with us. Now that I think back on this, I realize what an awful mess we must have left on the street. It was there that many of us met for the first time the person who would later become our life's partner. (I did!)

Ours was a simple way of life when compared with that of today's youth. I wonder how many teenagers react when told how generations before them have lived, how Saturday and Sunday evenings were spent. But I have to admit, my teenage grandchildren seem fascinated by the stories I tell when we talk about those times.

We cannot, however, keep on looking back; we have to go on. Today's teenagers have to decide on their entertainment. Their expectations are different, but they also have a much more difficult life in that they have so many choices. And who is wise enough to make the right ones? Always?

May their parents be strong, wise and loving. We should all spend much time in prayer for those who are now in the springtime of their lives!

Gertie Wagenaar lives in Stoney Creek, Ont.

central institution guiding the community;

- acknowledge that the principles of sphere sovereignty and the church as institute/organism has relevance only *within* the community;
- be closely involved in the various cultural activities and organizations: education, labour, politics, social services;
- be expected to support and fund these cultural activities;
- ensure that the clergy and teaching profession play a leading role in propagating and in enriching the Reformed vision.

The Reformed community can proudly proclaim its distinctive cultural presence in Canadian society. Its unyielding confession, expressed culturally, is a witness to a secular culture and an open invitation to all Christians in search of an authoritative faith. Such a community is in the world doing the Lord's business without being of the world and bowing to its cultural agenda.

Harry Groenewold is associate professor of history at The King's College, Edmonton, Alta.

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Canadian group tours the Dominican, distributes Bibles



Photo: Margaret Tigchelaar, courtesy WHBL
Carolyn VanHeerden presents a Spanish New Testament to a woman in the cane cutters' village of San Luis following Sunday worship at the Christian Reformed Church.

Marian Van Til
from a report by Margaret Tigchelaar

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — When Margaret Tigchelaar of Hamilton, Ontario, joined 19 other Christians on a flight to the Dominican Republic, most of them didn't know each

other. They came from Alberta, Ontario, and places between; they ranged in age from 25 to 70. But they all had something in common: a wish for some first-hand observations of mission work — in particular, the World Home Bible League's (WHBL) scripture distribution in Third

World countries.

They would have a chance to participate in that work themselves. Each person carried a Spanish New Testament which he or she would give "to womever the Lord would cause to cross our path," explains Margaret. With that common purpose, sharing a flight, and being part of a well-organized WHBL-sponsored tour, it didn't take long for members of the group to make friends.

The group arrived in Santo Domingo, the Dominican's capital. That city is, as Tigchelaar describes it, one "of stark contrasts — old and new, rich and poor." (It is rich in history, she notes, and is busy preparing for the 1992 celebration of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the Americas.)

Rewarding work

Neil and Sandy Hegeman, Christian Reformed

missionaries, guided the group around the city and brought them to the CRC's mission office which stocks WHBL materials for distribution. The group soon set about its task of distributing the New Testaments they had brought with them. And though their attempts at conversing in Spanish were halting, their efforts were soon rewarded.

"The broad smile on the face of a person receiving a (free!) Bible is indescribable, as is the joy one feels when, the next day, the recipient is actually reading it," says Tigchelaar. "Some of our richest memories were caused by those New Testaments. And there are never, never enough."

After a joyous Sunday, the group returned to Gautier, one of the communities in which some of them had worshipped. "During the week," says Tigchelaar, "the church is transformed into a Christian school, with blackboards and

curtains dividing the small auditorium into classrooms." The blackboards are used extensively because "study books are a necessity they simply cannot afford."

There are about 15 such schools in the area, she explains, and they all need good literature. Without it, it is tough to teach the children to read. With it, not only will the educating be easier, but so will spreading the gospel.

Now back home, Margaret Tigchelaar prays, "God forbid that this tour is no more than a memory on a few rolls of film." She says, "The World Home Bible League was founded with the goal [of putting] a Bible in every Bibleless home. God used our prayer and support to accomplish that goal — also in the Dominican Republic."

Falwell employees must join his church, tithe

LYNCHBURG, Va. (EP) — Employees in Jerry Falwell's various ministries must join his Thomas Road Baptist Church, and "tithe," or donate 10 per cent of their salaries to the church, Falwell announced March 10.

Falwell spokesman Mark DeMoss said the policy was not a new one, and that the announcement was "simply a

restatement and reemphasis of existing policy."

About 2,000 employees are affected by the policy, including employees of Liberty University, Old Time Gospel Hour, Lynchburg Christian Academy, Liberty Godparent Home, Liberty Broadcasting Network, and Thomas Road Baptist Church.

DeMoss explained that the

policy specified involvement with Thomas Road Baptist Church, rather than merely involvement in a Christian church. "We are by our very definition a local church ministry. Thomas Road Baptist church was developed first, and out of the church, over a number of years, grew other ministries, like a Christian academy, a Christian university, and the Old Time Gospel Hour. We make it clear that we are a local church

ministry, and our employees ought to be part of the local church."

DeMoss told EP News that there are three exceptions to the policy: current employees who were members of another area church when hired can remain with that church, employees who serve on the staff of another church don't have to leave their church, and women whose husbands are not employed by Falwell can attend church with their husbands.

"We're not trying to be unreasonable," he said.

However, an employee who was not told of the policy when hired, and subsequently joined another area church, would be required to leave that church if he/she did not fit one of the exceptions, DeMoss explained.

As religious organizations, Falwell's ministries are exempted from U.S. federal law which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of religion.

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Scientist says resurrection power may have altered dating of shroud

LONDON, England (EP) — Though carbon-14 dating of the Shroud of Turin shows the cloth to have been made between 1260 and 1390 A.D., the dating process may have been thrown off by power released during the resurrection of Christ, a scientist argues in a letter to the British science journal *Nature*.

Thomas Phillips, of Harvard's high energy physics

lab, says the image of a crucified man which appears on the cloth may have been burned into the cloth by intense heat or light which may have been accompanied by a "neutron flux" which would change carbon-13 into carbon-14. Such a "flux" would throw off the carbon-14 date, making the shroud seem less ancient.

"We don't know a lot about resurrections or what kind of

physical effects they may have," argues Phillips.

However, Paul Damon of the University of Arizona's geosciences division, who led the carbon-14 study of the shroud, says, "These results provide conclusive evidence that the Shroud of Turin is medieval."

Faith/life collision

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (EP) — Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter told students at Memphis State University that the abortion issue was the only one which caused a conflict between his personal beliefs and professional responsibilities. Carter said he was "never convinced that Christ would approve abortion," but felt that as president he was obliged to support federal laws. Carter, a Georgia Democrat who is also a Baptist deacon, said he generally experienced "no conflict, as a politician, with my religious faith."

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Hillside strangler makes profession of faith

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP) — Kenneth Bianchi, the "Hillside Strangler," says he's accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour. "My whole life has changed," says Bianchi, who is serving several life sentences for murdering seven women.

"Once you know Jesus Christ, you are never the same again," Bianchi said in an interview broadcast on television's "Entertainment Tonight." The gospel of Jesus Christ is the only book that I use now to find truth."

In an interview conducted by the Florida-based group Jesus Behind Bars, Bianchi expressed resignation about being incarcerated without hope of parole. "I've turned the entire decision of whether or not I'll

ever be released — even whether I have a chance for parole — I've turned the entire decision over to Jesus Christ," he said. "When the Lord is ready to release me to the streets, he'll open the doors. I have absolute and total faith in him."

Bianchi was interviewed for a report on an upcoming NBC television movie called "The Case of the Hillside Stranglers." Bianchi became known as the Hillside Strangler because many of his victim's bodies were found on hillsides in Los Angeles and Glendale, California.

Attorney Gerald Chaleff, who represented Bianchi's cousin and partner in crime, doesn't believe Bianchi's story of conversion. "He's a liar," says Chaleff. "He's just a manipulator. He's doing everything he can to get out of this [prison]."

IBM supports Australian mission

SYDNEY, Australia (EP) — International Business Machines (IBM) recently donated \$80,000 worth of new computers and furniture to Wesley Central Mission based in Sydney, which will use the resources to help establish five new classrooms to train unemployed people in office and other work skills.

"We have established 'skillshare' in conjunction with the [Australian] federal government and with support from IBM," said the Rev. Dr. Gordon Moyes, superintendent of Wesley. The classes offered by the mission are taught by qualified staff who will train students for office jobs in businesses, banks, and insurance companies, as well as how to interview for jobs and fill out employment forms. Classes for domestic skills are also offered, as well as others. The classes are offered primarily to long-term unemployed and disadvantaged people of any age, and are free of charge. Moyes said that 75 per cent of the students are placed "without great difficulty" after they complete the six-month, 35-hour week training course.

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Amendment to Oklahoma law allows Christian celebration

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (EP) — Oklahoma's school children will be able to acknowledge that Christmas is the celebration of Christ's birth, if an amendment approved by the state's House of Representatives becomes law.

Rep. Bill Graves (R-Oklahoma City) offered an amendment to a holiday observance bill which stated, "Students shall be allowed to celebrate the Christmas holiday in school through the singing of carols and other observances in honour of Jesus Christ." Despite protests from some that the amendment was unconstitutional, the House passed it on a bipartisan 63-30 vote.

"Some of the schools in Oklahoma are probably allowing the singing of

Christmas carols and display of manger scenes and things that are commemorating the birth of Christ, but some aren't," Graves told EP News. "That's particularly true here in Oklahoma City. Christmas is kind of secularized. They sing about a partridge in a pear tree, and 'Jingle Bells,' but not 'Silent Night' or 'Joy to the World.' I think that's because a lot of them are fearful they're going to be sued if they do that. Hopefully this will — if it remains in the bill — give some school administrators help in allowing students to honour the birth of Christ, like Christmas is intended for."

Graves, who attends Quail Springs Church of Christ, discounts concerns about constitutionality. "The framers of the First Amendment sure would not

have thought something like this was unconstitutional, since there were five states that had official state churches when they passed the First Amendment, and none of the states repealed their state churches because of the First Amendment," he notes.

The bill still has to pass the state's Senate, and Graves says the author of the bill will probably try to remove Graves' amendment in the Senate.

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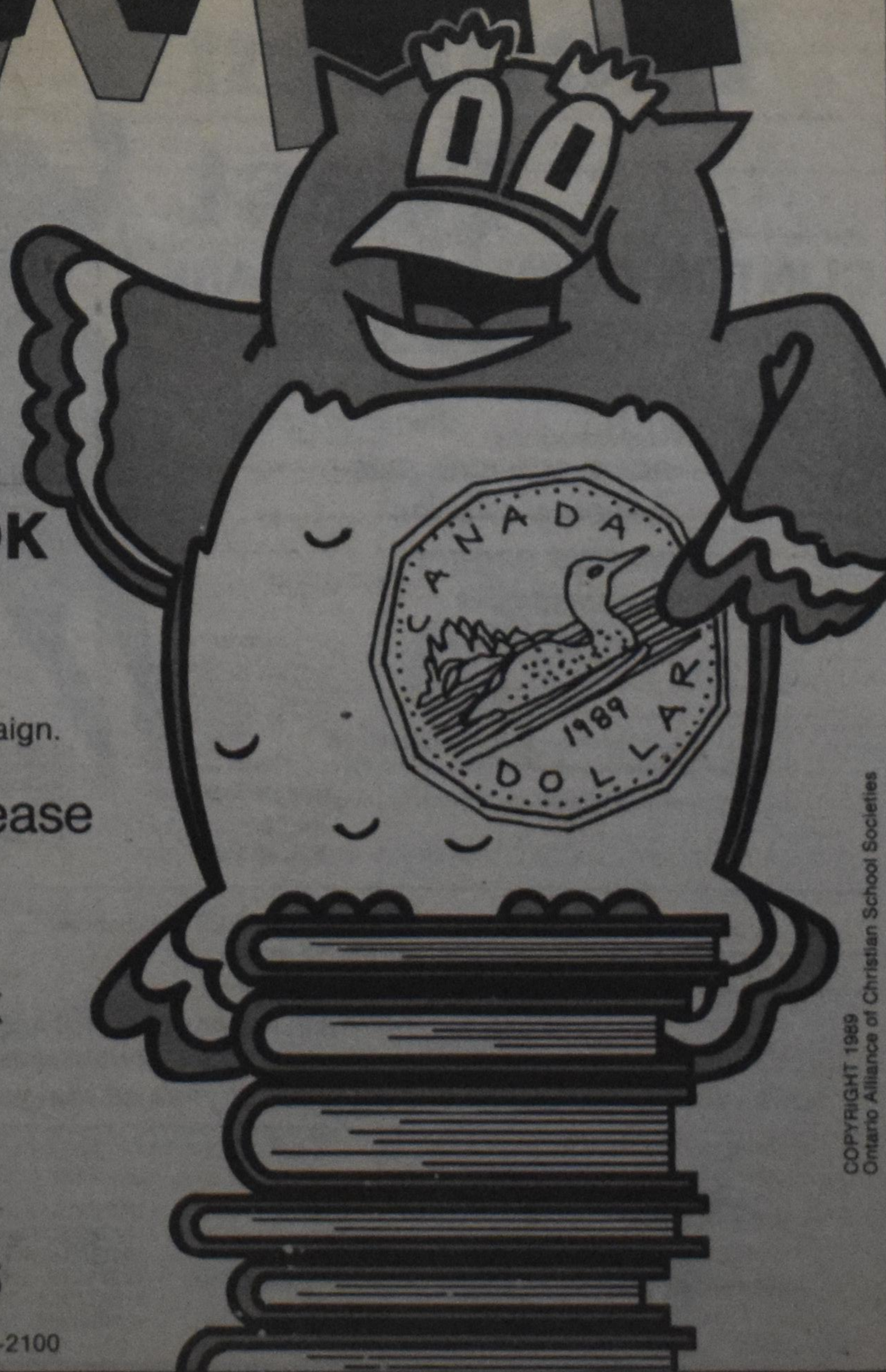
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Peter and Marja are



Dear P and M:

My wife and I have been married for three years and have a two-year old daughter. Although we love each other sincerely, our marriage is under heavy strain. The big stumbling block is my wife's inability to handle money. She is a habitual and compulsive spender. I could call it an addiction. She buys things we don't need or can't afford. She is very generous to her friends and relatives and buys them gifts galore. Every time she sees a "cute" outfit for the baby, she has to buy it.

About a year ago I destroyed all our credit cards. I am handling the household bills and any others myself. However, she now borrows money from others or spends a part of her grocery money on whatever she fancies. My income isn't that big and we are

trying to save for a down payment on a house, but we don't seem to be getting anywhere. All we now do is argue about money and I've reached the end of my rope. What can we do? Anything you may suggest we will try! Thanks a lot!

Dear Footing-the-Bill:

Your wife's generosity, in itself, is a good virtue. She wants to demonstrate her love for her family and friends; she wants what is best for her child.

Perhaps as a single person she could afford to do these things. Now she has to adjust her generosity to your income. Has she considered the possibility of a part-time job? This could allow her to be generous without turning to others and going behind your back.

However, it is time that you

see your pastor or a counsellor together. When people reach the end of their rope they should get some outside help.

There are two problem areas that need to be discussed. The first involves the family budget. You are saving. She is spending. In a young marriage it is an adjustment to share the same financial goals. You must agree on priorities. If both of you shared this dream of owning a house and both of you fully realized the cost of that dream, some of that spending might be curbed. Make the dream more real by seeing a realtor together. A real estate agent can also do some financial planning with you.

The second is a communication problem. All you do is argue. The more you argue, the more she spends. A counsellor can help you in this area. Counselling can also help

you discover whether or not your wife's compulsive spending habits are due to a longstanding emotional need to buy love and affection.

Best wishes. We thank God that you can write and say that you "love each other sincerely." That love will see you through the adjustments common to a young marriage.

Dear P and M:

I'm a Christian high school student. One of my girlfriends has hinted to me that she has been abused by her father. When we girls get together we talk and although she has not given any details, I think the abuses involved are beatings and possibly sexual advances. What should I do?

Dear Suspicious:

Your friend's "hints" may well be signals for help. Find a private setting with her and take the risk of expressing your concern directly. Reassure her that you will stand by her, no matter what.

You must seek help from an adult. Confide in a teacher or a school counsellor, even if your friend denies your suspicions. This person can help you keep a watchful eye on the situation. Don't deal with this on your own.

If she confirms your worst fears, encourage her to go for help. Be prepared to go with her

if she's hesitant.

Help is available. Each community has an abuse centre which can advise you about what steps to take. Family and Children's Services has well-established procedures for dealing with this problem. The family doctor also knows what to do.

We wonder whether your school has an annual program that deals with physical and/or sexual abuse. We now know that this is not an uncommon problem, also in our Christian communities. Public awareness helps prevent and end abuse. An educational program can name the problem for victims and show them how and where to get help. As you discuss your concerns with one of your teachers, ask that the school implement such a program if it has not already done so.

Remember, you can't solve your girlfriend's problem on your own. Talk to an adult. Talk to a *trusted* adult! Talk to a *qualified* adult!

You are a good friend.

Thank you for writing and asking for advice.

Your role is to be supportive. Our prayers are with you and your friend.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parievliet, Tom Zeyl, Willy-Suk-Kleer, Bert Witvoet.

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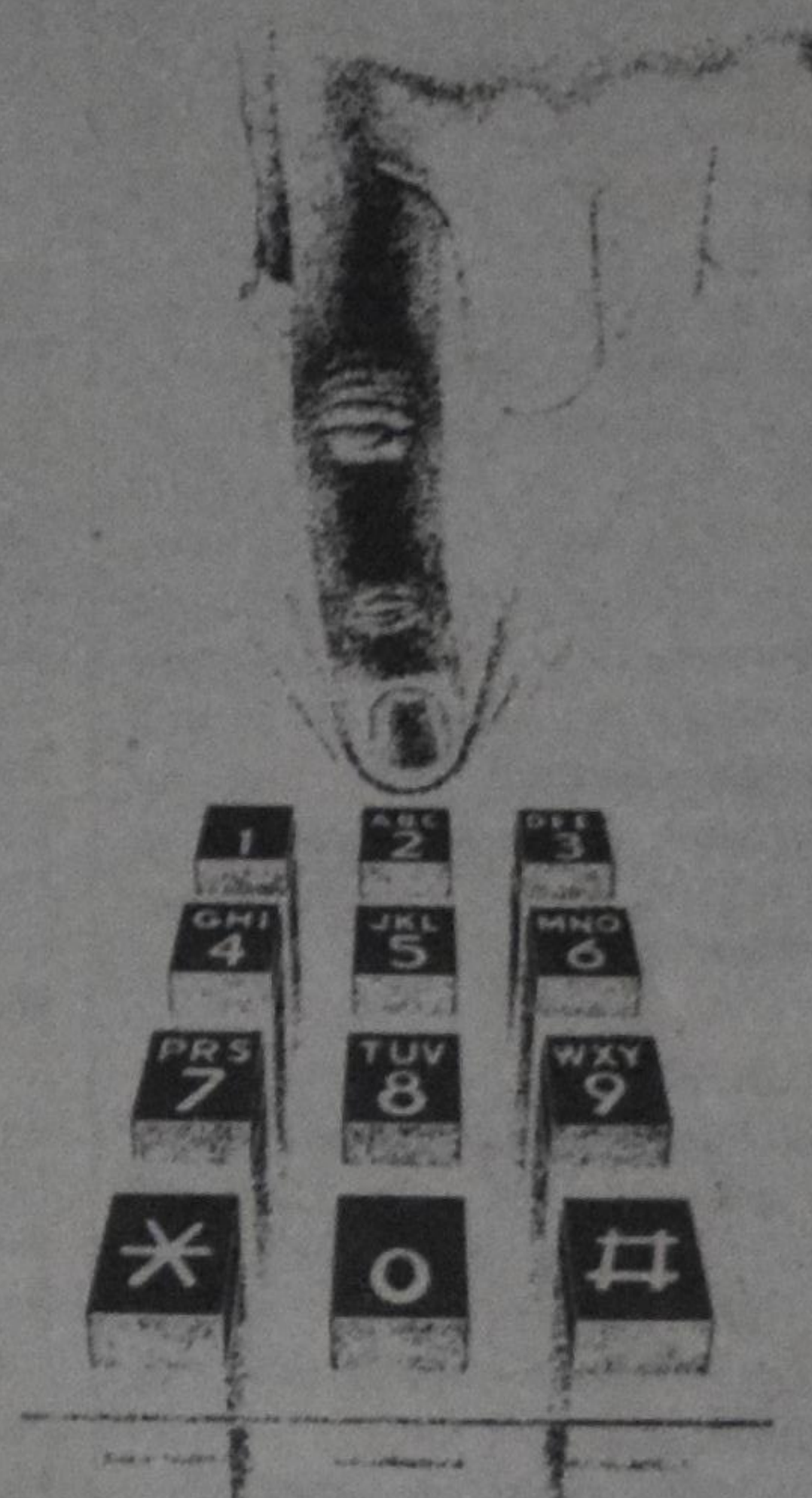
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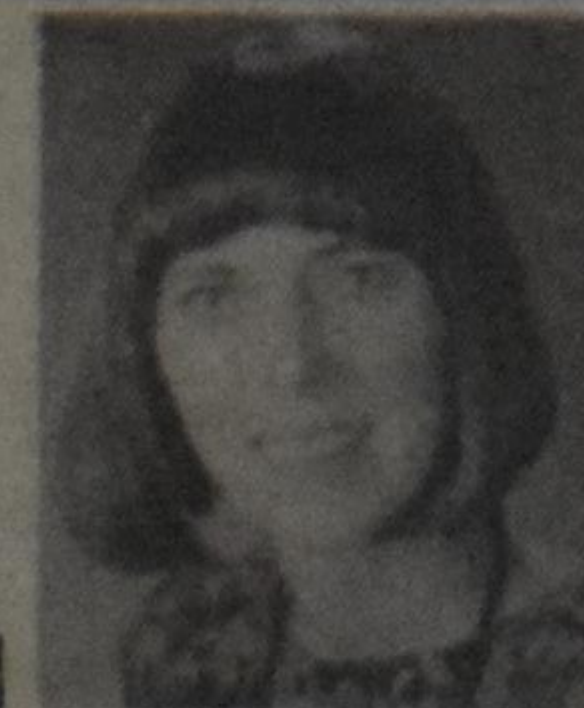
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OBITUARIES Obituaries should be composed as they are to appear in Calvinist Contact. A sheet with information sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. The \$35.00 rate for obituaries covers any length up to six column inches. Calvinist Contact reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$10.00 per column inch.	Eindhoven Whitby 1954 April 22 1989 With praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, we are happy to announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents JOHN and INGE VANDEPOL (nee Stuurstraat) As we celebrate this day, we celebrate the love you share together and the love you have shown for all of us in countless ways. Congratulations, Mom and Dad, (Mama and Papa)! We love you, and pray that the Lord will continue to bless you for many more happy years together. Jane & Stan Piersma — Oshawa Jennifer, Cara Linda & Tom Zekveld — Oshawa David, Karin, Timothy-John Alan Vandepol & Martha Van Belle (fiancee) — Courtice Renee Vandepol — Belleville Home address: 3 Nearctic Court, Whitby, ON L1N 6P7.	Nieuwerkerk Alliston a/d IJssel Ont. 1939 April 20 1989 With joy and thankfulness to our God we hope to celebrate, D.V., the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents PETER and WILLEMINA SCHEP (nee Mourik) We pray that the Lord will continue to bless them and that he will always be near them. Wedding text: Ps. 73:23 Arie & Judy Schep — Guelph Debbie and Arnold Vervoort, Suzanne and Robin Willy & Ralph Hollema — Alliston Rick, Harry, Christina, Peter, Elaine Diane & John Van Campen — Utopia Audrey, Maureen, Mark, Jonathan, Jeffrey Nelly & John Geddes — London Jenny, Carrie Janet & Ted Vandevs — Barrie Bradley, Karen Betty Ann & Don Duggan — Alliston Amanda, Sacha, Michael and great-grandchildren Michael Vervoort and Ashley Vervoort. We invite you to celebrate with us on Friday, Apr. 21, 1989. Reception begins at 8 p.m. at the Alliston arena, 49 Nelson St. W. Home address: 358 Albert St. E., Alliston, ON L0M 1A0.	For Sale Small pipe organ, rebuilt, new blower, guaranteed. \$15,000 F.O.B. Toronto. Phone (416) 292-4364.	Psalm 42 On Feb. 20, 1989, at her residence "Holland Christian Homes," Brampton, Ont., the Lord called home AALTJE (Alice) VEENSTRA (nee Hooyenga) at the age of 78 years. Predeceased by her husband Anne Veenstra in 1981. Dear mother of: Winnie & Emery LeBlanc — Cape Pele, N.B. Anna & Allen Hoekstra — Chatham, Ont. Jean & Peter Van Veen — Morrisburg, Ont. Janke & Tjalling de Wal — Cobden, Ont. Mattie & Fred Zandbergen — Brinston, Ont. Jim & Marla Veenstra — Chatham, Ont. 21 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.
Anniversaries 1954 April 23 1989 "He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (Ps. 23:3) With joy and thankfulness to God we are happy to announce the 35th anniversary of our parents and grandparents WILLIAM and BETTY PRINZEN (nee Geertsma) We pray that the Lord may continue to bless and keep them. With much love from all of us: Christine & Jack Vanderniet Robert, Laura, Brian, Lisa Bernard & Diane Prinzen David, Philip, Stephen, Rachel Andy & Grace Prinzen Jeremy, Stephanie, Patricia, Felicia Bill & Tammy Prinzen Haley, Isaac, Kaleb Dick & Karen Prinzen Zachary Jane & Glen McQuaid Bradley, Melissa, Angela Joanna & Robert Sarley Jeffrey Julia Prinzen Home address: 30 Main St., P.O. Box 47, Bloomfield, ON K0K 1G0. 1939 1989 On Apr. 20, 1989, we hope to celebrate with our parents and grandparents TJEERD and AALTJE TRIEMSTRA (nee Van Der Velde) their 50th wedding anniversary. May the Lord continue to bless them in the years to come. Vic & Margaret Triemstra — Chilliwack, B.C. Judy, Terry, Tammy We hope to celebrate this special occasion with an open house, Thursday, Apr. 20, 1989, from 1-5 p.m. at 49260 Camp River Road, Chilliwack, B.C. Home address: 9710 Carleton St., Chilliwack, BC V2P 6E3.	1939 May 8 1989 Hoogezand Red Deer "Great is God's faithfulness" The children of OMKE and FROUKJE VOS (nee Teule) praise God for the love our parents have shared with each other and their family through 50 years of marriage. As we celebrate this wonderful occasion, we pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in his care. Dwight & Arlene Vos — Kamloops, B.C. Brett, Mark Gerry & Margaret Hessel — Red Deer, Alta. Rob, Jeff Don & Hennie Switzer — Surrey, B.C. Alexander, Adrienne John & Betty Vos — Edmonton, Alta. Brent, Mike Andy & Karen Vos — Victoria, B.C. Home address: 3830-46th St., Red Deer, Alta.	Summer Job Market DEVLIN, Ont.: Summer help wanted: Student required for dairy farm located near Devlin, Ont. Contact Henry Kaemingh at (807) 486-3662.	Obituaries The members of the Golden Age Club, and the residents of South Chatham Village wish to express their deepest sympathy to Mrs. Margaret Zuidema, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, with the passing away of Mr. KLAAS ZUIDEMA at the age of 84 years. We pray that God will comfort and strengthen Mrs. Zuidema and the family now, and each new day to come.	SYTSE (Cecil) VISSER on his 64th birthday. Predeceased by his dearly loved wife Juliana Visser (nee Hofstra). Dear father and grandfather of: Gerald & Wilma Visser — Ancaster, Ont. Curtis, Stacy, Jordan Philip & Shirley Visser — Owen Sound, Ont. Nathan, Michael, Juliana, Rebecca Howard & Cathy Visser — Spruce Grove, Alta. Also survived by his mother Mrs. Gjeit Sytse Visser and his sister Mrs. Akke Visser, both of the Netherlands. Funeral service was held on Thursday, Mar. 16, 1989, at the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. Peter De Haan officiating. Correspondence address: G. Visser, 129 Lloyminn Ave., Ancaster, ON L9G 1H7.
	Real Estate Moving to or from Thunder Bay? Call Don Ten Have (807) 577-4810 Representing Midwest Realty Limited (807) 623-7404	Real Estate Greenhouse for sale: 65,000 sq. ft. greenhouse and auxiliary buildings. Total 12 acres of sandy soil near Waterdown, Ont. Nice one-storey house. Contact Roland Bradshaw Real Estate Ltd., Hamilton, Ont. Phone (416) 574-2433 and ask for George Newlands, Sales Rep.	Look for Vacation issue next week	

Classified

Help wanted	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
<p>MUTUAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS invites you to consider an opportunity for service in a Christ-centred program for children ages nine to 18 with emotional and behavioural problems. This family-model program has three homes with house-parent couples and child-care workers living in, except during days off. Couples, and single men and women are invited to consider and apply to: Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Road, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0; (416) 899-2311.</p> <p>Reliable person to work on dairy farm in Williamsburg, 40 miles south of Ottawa. Must be good milker; some mechanical ability would be an asset. Good working conditions; attractive two-storey farm house available. References if possible. Phone (613) 535-2576.</p> <p>Due to expansion of greenhouse business, help wanted for transplanting and general work. H. Alkema & Sons Ltd., 229 Central Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 1X9. Tel. (416) 945-9454.</p> <p>Cake Decorator/Baker's Assistant needed for full-time employment. Will train. Apply in writing to Queenston Bakery Inc., 120 Lake St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 5Y1.</p> <p>Are you interested in working with special needs young people (ages 10-16)? We are looking for a married couple (houseparents) as well as a staff person to work in a group home where Christian principles and morals are stressed. Send resume to: Shalom Group Home, P.O. Box 13654, Station A, St. John's, NF A1B 4G1, or call (709) 579-2208 and ask for Rob.</p> <p>Energetic individual needed for busy landscaping company doing interlocking stone work, fencing, landscaping, sodding and tree work. Experience preferred, but willing to train the right person. Call in the evening after 7 p.m. (519) 836-5959. The Tree man, R.R.#5, Rockwood, ON N0B 2K0 (close to Guelph). Ask for Ed Kuipery.</p> <p>Needed immediately: self-starter to manage and work on a cash-crop and sweet corn farm. Must be competent in equipment maintenance and have a class "Z" licence. Please call (416) 729-3423 or write Dennis Kunica, R.R.#2, Beeton, ON L0G 1A0.</p>	<p>AYLMER, Ont.: Immanuel Christian School invites applications for definite openings at the junior level and a possible opening at the intermediate level. Preference will be given to applicants who possess the ability to teach in one or more of the following specialty areas: French, phys. ed., (intermediate) and special education. Send letter of application and resume to: Andy Vanderploeg, Principal, Immanuel Christian School, 75 Caverly Rd., Aylmer, ON N5H 2P6 or call (519) 773-8476 (school) or (519) 773-5009 (home).</p> <p>BELLEVILLE, Ont.: Belleville District Christian School is in need of a teacher in Grade 2 and in Grade 7 and 8 for the 1989/90 school year. Interested parties are requested to forward letters of application and resumes to: Belleville District Christian School, R.R.#5, Belleville, ON K8N 4Z5. (M. VanDyk, Principal (613) 962-7849).</p> <p>BOWMANVILLE, Ont.: Durham Christian High School in Bowmanville is soliciting applications for two teaching positions for the 1989/90 school year. The one position is in English and the other is a girls physical education/mathematics combination. Please send applications, resumes, and references to: Durham Christian High School, R.R.#1, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2. Attention: Mr. Ren Siebenga.</p> <p>BURLINGTON: Trinity Christian School Burlington, Ont. has possible openings for teachers in the Junior and Intermediate divisions. Please send resume to: Trinity Christian School, 650 Walkers Line, Burlington, ON L7N 2E7.</p> <p>BURNABY, B.C.: John Knox Christian School is looking for a teacher to fill a probable half-time Kindergarten position, beginning Sept. 1989. Applicants must be eligible for B.C. certification. Please mail applications to P. Valkenier, Principal, 8260-13th Ave., Burnaby, BC V3N 2G5. Phone (604) 522-1410.</p> <p>CAMBRIDGE, Ont.: Cambridge Christian School invites applications for a teaching position at the intermediate level. Ability to teach French required. Send resume to: Peter Van Dyken, Principal, Cambridge Christian School, 229 Myers Rd., Cambridge, ON N1R 7H3. Phone (519) 623-2261 (school) or (519) 623-1409 (home).</p> <p>CHILLIWACK, B.C.: Chilliwack Christian School has an opening for a Grade 1 teacher beginning September 1989. Please send resume or contact the principal at Chilliwack Christian School, 9750 McNaught Rd., P.O. Box 161, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6G2. Phone (604) 792-4171.</p> <p>DUNNVILLE, Ont.: Dunnville Christian School will need a Grade 4/5 teacher by September. Strengths in French and music will be an asset. Dunnville lies at the Grand River on Hwy. 3 and is within a short drive from Redeemer College, Hamilton and St. Catharines. Send your applications to Mr. William R. Rang c/o Dunnville Chr. School, R.R.#1, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1. Phone (416) 774-5142.</p>	<p>DRAYTON, Ont.: Calvin Christian School has an opening for Grade 1 for the 1989/90 school year. Due to maternity leave, we also need a Grade 3 teacher from Sept. 1 — Dec. 31, 1989. (There is a possibility of this becoming a full-time position.) We also have a possible opening for a Grade 7/8 teacher. This position may possibly be combined with the Vice-Principalship in the school. The ability to teach French in all positions is a requirement. Please send requests for application forms to: Mr. A.J. Vanderstoel, Principal, Calvin Christian School, Box 141, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0. Phone (519) 638-2935 (school).</p> <p>GEORGETOWN, Ont.: The Georgetown District Christian School invites applications for possible positions in the primary and junior grades. Strength in Music and/or French would be an asset. Also a possible vacancy at the Kindergarten level (3 days). Please forward resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. George Petrusma, Principal, R.R.#1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4. Tel. (416) 877-4221 (school) or (416) 877-6444 (residence).</p> <p>HOUSTON, B.C.: Houston Christian School, a Grade 1-10, CSI school, situated in North Central B.C., is seeking applicants for one possible opening in Grade 3/4, and one definite opening in Grade 5/6, with a preferred strength in language arts. Please send all applications to: H. Fritschy, Principal, Houston Christian School, Box 237, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0. Phone: (604) 845-7736.</p> <p>LONDON, Ont.: London District Christian Secondary School invites applications for possible openings in the science/math and English areas for the 1989/90 school year. Please send your letter of application and resume to Mr. H. Kooy, Principal, London District Christian Secondary School, 24 Braesyde Ave., London, ON N5W 1V3. Phone (519) 455-4360.</p> <p>LUCKNOW, Ont.: Lucknow District Christian School requires a teacher for the Grade 1/2 classroom or for the Grade 3/4/5 classroom. Send application and resume to: Principal, Etty Broer, Lucknow District Christian School, Box 550, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0.</p> <p>MUSKOKA, Ont.: Muskoka Christian School requires a teacher for a split grade primary class — Grades 1 and 2. We are a small school of 75 students, a member of OACS, though more interdenominational than most, set in the heart of beautiful Muskoka. We request a full resume with your application. Mailing address: Box 150, Utterson, ON P0B 1M0. For inquiries call Bill Fitch, Principal, (705) 385-2847 (school) or (705) 645-8276 (home).</p> <p>NEERLANDIA, Alta.: Neerlandia School, a public Christian School, requires an elementary/lower secondary teacher for the 1989/90 school year. Must have expertise in art (fine arts) and language arts or social studies. Specialties in phys-ed and French are desirable. Primary duties will be in the elementary grades. Send applications and inquiries to John Piers, Principal, Neerlandia School, Box 10, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0. Phone school (403) 674-5581, home (403) 674-4308.</p>	<p>MEDICINE HAT, Alta.: Medicine Hat Christian School, a dynamic and growing interdenominational school in sunny southern Alberta invites applications for a position in junior high (Grades 7-9), commencing Sept. 1989. Preference will be given to candidates whose specialties are: social studies, language arts and physical education. We also have an opening in ECS (Kindergarten) for four days per week. In addition we need a Grade 1/2 teacher (combined class). Interested applicants please forward resume and/or direct inquiries to: Wm. Slofstra, Principal, 68 Rice Dr. S.E., Medicine Hat, AB T1B 3X2 or phone (403) 526-7192 (home) or (403) 526-3246 (school).</p> <p>NEWMARKET, Ont.: Holland Marsh District Christian School. In our caring, supportive community just north of Toronto, we need teachers for Grade 2 and 8 and Kindergarten. Please consider these openings prayerfully for 1989/90 and address any inquiries and applications to: Corrie Bootsma, Vice-Principal, Holland Marsh District Christian School, R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9. Tel. (416) 775-3701.</p> <p>ORILLIA, Ont.: Orillia Christian School invites applications for possible positions in the primary and intermediate grades, commencing September 1989. Strengths in music and/or French would be an asset. Orillia Christian School is an interdenominational school with 143 students and eight teachers. Please forward resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. George Kamphuis, Principal, Orillia Christian School, Box 862, Orillia, ON L3V 1G6. Tel.: (705) 326-0532.</p> <p>RED DEER, Alta.: The Red Deer Christian School has possible openings for the 1989/90 school year in the following areas: Full-time Kindergarten and Grade 2 and part-time French (50 per cent). Interested individuals should direct inquiries and applications to the school at 14 McVicar St., Red Deer, AB T4N 0M2, c/o Mr. R. Duggan.</p> <p>REXDALE, Ont.: Timothy Christian School, for the 1989/90 year will have openings at all grade levels, plus a probable full-time remedial vacancy. Qualified applicants are invited to send resumes, including letters of reference to: Mr. G. Postma, Principal, 28 Elmhurst Dr., Rexdale, ON M9W 2J5. Phone (416) 741-5770.</p> <p>SMITHERS, B.C.: The Christian School Society of Smithers and Telkwa of Smithers B.C. has an opening in elementary and secondary French, upper elementary language arts and primary Grades 2 or 3, and a possible opening in elementary and secondary phys-ed. Ours is a two-campus school system. Please contact: Glen Ewald at Box 2117, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0, Phone school (604) 847-9833, res. (604) 847-2186.</p> <p>ST. THOMAS, Ont.: Ebenezer Christian School has a definite opening for a Grade 2 & 3 combination beginning September 1989. An interest and ability to teach French would be an asset. Interested applicants please send a resume or letters of inquiry to Mr. Tony De Koter, Principal, Ebenezer Christian School, 77 Fairview Ave., St. Thomas, ON N5R 4X7.</p>	<p>TERRACE: Centennial Chr. School, located in Terrace, B.C., is inviting applications for openings in K-8 for the 1989-90 school year. Centennial Chr. School, operating since 1967, with a present enrolment of 92 students, moving into new school facilities and adding a possible Grade 8 class, will make the 89-90 school year exciting and challenging. The school, located in the beautiful Skeena Valley, offers many dynamic opportunities for teachers. For further information please contact: Frank Voogd, Principal, 3602 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2V6. Tel. (604) 635-6173</p> <p>TORONTO, Ont.: Toronto Central Christian School invites applications for a teaching position in the junior class (multi-Grades 3, 4, and 5). Experience, interest in an integrated curriculum approach and some French skills would be an asset. Please call G. Dekker at the school (416) 968-2036 or home (416) 466-6304 or send resume to: Toronto Central Christian School, 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, ON M4X 1C5.</p> <p>WILLIAMSBURG, Ont.: Timothy Christian School of Williamsburg, in beautiful eastern Ontario, and fairly close to Ottawa, is in need of a teacher for Grade 2 and 3 (20 pupils). This attractive seven-room school has at present: 132 students from K-8, a central library, a gym, large playgrounds and a very supportive Christian community. Teachers who would like to become part of our dedicated team of 10 teachers are asked to send their applications to the principal of TCS, Williamsburg, ON K0C 2H0. Phone (613) 535-2687 (school) or 535-2152 (home).</p>
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<p>Young Christian woman wishes to let rooms in her house to other young Christian women. Centrally located at Limeridge and West Fifth St. in Hamilton, Ont. Occupancy: July 1, 1989. For details call Sandra at (416) 648-1681 or write to: 26 Daffodil Cres., Ancaster, ON L9K 1C8.</p>				
<div><div><div>Want to rent a car while in Holland?</div><div></div><div>Jan Kalma has the key to all forms of car rentals.</div><div>Will deliver car to Amsterdam airport if desired.</div><div></div><div>De Meer 24, 9201 EZ Drachten The Netherlands — Tel. (31) 5120-15199 Fax (31) 5120-32324</div></div></div>				
For Rent				
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<p><i>For more teachers' ads see page 18</i></p>				

Classified

Teachers	Teachers	Help wanted	Help wanted	Miscellaneous
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Smithville Christian School
Townline Road
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0
phone (416) 957-7796

Wellandport Christian School (245 students)

- * Grade 3 position
(those with expertise in French, Art, Phys.Ed. or Music are encouraged to apply.)

Forward letters of application to:

Mr. Wm. J. Thies, principal
Wellandport Christian School
Wellandport, Ontario L0R 2J0
phone: (416) 386: 6272

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Help wanted	Help wanted
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Canada (416) 826-5722
Please contact: Francine Goodyer, administrator

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Events/ Classified

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London District Christian Secondary School
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“The Day They Kidnapped
the Pope”
(a play dealing with the quest for world peace)
by Joao Bethencourt
Directed by Nancy DeVries and Art Tiesma
Tickets: \$4.00 24 Braesyde Ave. April 20, 21, 22
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When? 10 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 19, 1989
Where? Stone Pavilion, Pinehurst Lake Conservation
Area, Waterloo Regional Road 75
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6 km. north of Paris.
For info. call M. Booy (519) 269-3718 or
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Weekly Puzzle by Kenneth Witte

ACROSS

1 “Pequod” captain
5 Rod
9 Witch town
14 Peevishness
15 Maleficent
16 Gr. public square
17 Attired
18 Legendary Swiss figure
19 Old Nick
20 Evasive
23 Sculls
24 Noted Giant
25 Embraces firmly
28 Afr. antelope
30 Strikebreaker
34 Blood trunk
35 Reliance
37 Genetic letters
38 Act evasively
41 Slender finial
42 Zeus’ shield
43 Of an eye part
44 Silt a spell
46 Actor Chaney
47 Fetid
48 Tokyo once
50 Headliner
51 Act evasively
59 Semiprecious stones
60 Require
61 Swiss river
62 Reclipt
63 Surrealist painter
64 Store away
65 Bergen’s Mortimer
66 Fr. town
67 Hardy heroine

DOWN

1 Fundamentals
2 Mound
3 Jal —
4 Cartain furniture supports
5 Opera singer
6 Extra portions
7 A Tomlin

8 A Fitzgerald
9 Egypt.
Nobelist
10 Ten-percenters
11 Segal’s “— Story”
12 Iroquoian
13 Shopping center
21 Tropical fruit
22 “March King”
25 Prank
26 Jeweler’s lens
27 Musical upbeat
28 Architectural line
29 — and bolts
31 Monstrous
32 Single year record
33 Very much
35 Afr. land
36 US president
39 Leavenworth occupant

40 Cloudy
45 Bank worker
47 Atelier
49 Gave medicine to
50 Short period
51 Groups of seas

52 “Wish — a star”
53 Pathway
54 Terminates
55 Chair
56 Detest
57 God of love
58 Bastes

Last Week’s Puzzle

PENAL CELL SAWA
ARENA AREA TWIN
RIVET BRASSRING
KEEL MIER PONCE
REMIND HANKER
POM ELF TANG
ELOPE EARL DRAG
KARAT VIE KOALA
EVER FETE EXITS
THOR HEN LOP
MATTER POSTER
APRIL COUP LOOM
CHAMPIONS DIANA
RICE GIDE ADDER
ODER ONUS MESSY

Calendar of Events

Apr. 15 Elders’ Conference Classis Toronto. Speaker: Rev. Peter Van Egmond on “Communication and interpersonal relations.” At 2 p.m. in the CRC, Springdale, Ont.

Apr. 15 Peter Slofstra in concert with the SRS Studio Band at 8 p.m. in the CRC, 1620 Erbsville Rd., Waterloo, Ont.

Apr. 15 Concert by “Trio Vivant” at 8 p.m., CRC, Clarkson, Ont. For tickets phone (416) 274-6842 or 823-7262.

Apr. 16 Haydn’s “The Seasons” performed by the Listowel Concert Singers and the London Sinfonia Orchestra. At 8 p.m., Trinity United Church, Listowel, Ont. For info. call (519) 291-3280.

Apr. 17 Concert by Redeemer College Choir and Band at 8 p.m., at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Apr. 18-26 RCBPA meetings: Apr. 18: Smithville Chapter at 8 p.m. at The Old Farm Inn; Apr. 19: St. Catharines Chapter at 8 p.m. at the Parkway Inn; Apr. 24: Mississauga/Toronto Chapter at 8 p.m. at Howard Johnson Airport Hotel; Apr. 26: Hamilton Chapter at 7 a.m. at the Burlington Holiday Inn. For info. call (416) 524-1203.

Apr. 18-29 CSS’s Harry Houtman in Alberta.

Apr. 20-22 London District Christian Secondary School students present the play “The Day They Kidnapped The Pope.” At 8 p.m. at the school, London, Ont.

Apr. 21 Peter Slofstra in concert with the SRS Studio Band at 8 p.m., Covenant CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.

Apr. 21 Christian contemporary singers, DeGarmo and Key, in concert at 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Apr. 21-23 25th Anniversary of the Brantford Chr. School. Alumni, former teachers, members and friends are invited. For info. call (519) 752-0433.

Apr. 22 “The Great 88 and Other Keyboards,” a young people concert at 2 p.m. in the Redeemer College Auditorium, Ancaster, Ont., introducing the piano, the harpsichord, the organ and the synthesizer. Music to see!

Apr. 22 Concert by Sarnia’s “Soli Deo Gloria” with guest choir “Conspirito” from Wyoming. At 8 p.m. in the First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.

Apr. 28 CCM Niagara Chapter meets at 8 p.m., Bethany CRC, Fenwick, Ont.

Apr. 28 Organist John Vandertuin in recital at 8 p.m.,

Trinity CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.

Apr. 29 The King’s College - Convocation/ Graduation at 7 p.m. in All-Saints Cathedral, Edmonton, Alta.

Apr. 29 Concert by the combined St. Thomas Ladies Choir, the St. Thomas Male Choir and the Strathroy Mixed Choir. At 8 p.m. in the CRC, Mt. Brydes, Ont.

Apr. 29 Spring concert by Andre Knevel at 8 p.m. in Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.

May 5 Peter Slofstra in concert with the SRS Studio Band, at 8 p.m., Chatham & District Chr. High, Chatham, Ont.

May 5-7 Annual Young Adults Spring Rally in Burlington, Ont. Main speaker: Rev. D. Feddes. For info. call (519) 623-1734 or (416) 383-1134.

May 6 Camp Ke-Mon-Oya Staff Reunion, from 4-8 p.m. at Grace CRC, Scarborough, Ont. For info. call (416) 466-6304 (p.m.)

May 9-13 Organist Frans van der Hauw (Bolsward) in concert: May 9: at 7:30 p.m., Heritage Hall, Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont.; May 10: at 8 p.m. in Maranatha Can. Ref. Church Fergus, Ont.; May 12: at 8 p.m. Knox Presb. Church, Grand Valley, Ont.; May 13: at 8 p.m. Collier St. United Church, Barrie, Ont.

May 10 Convention 1989 of the Can. Fed. of CR Women. At Bramalea Baptist Church (corner Hwy. 7 and Dixie Rd.). Speakers: Rev. H.A. Vander Windt and Mrs. Donna Lee Walter.

May 12-14 Spring Conference of the CR Singles Fellowship of Ottawa. At Carleton University, Ottawa, Ont. Keynote speaker: Rev. Jack Quartel. For info. call (613) 727-5851 or 591-1432. Register before April 25, 1989.

May 19-21 Ninth Annual Clinton Klompen Feest. Fri.-Sat.: RCMP Musical Ride, etc.; Sunday: Interdenominational church service only. For info. call (519) 482-7893.

May 19-22 Fifteenth Annual All-Ontario Young Calvinist Convention “Prepare for Glory” at Carleton University, Ottawa, Ont. For info. call (519) 745-3371.

May 20-22 40th Anniversary of the CRC, Aylmer, Ont. Everyone welcome!

May 26-27 “New Creation” Retreat Weekend for Classes Niagara/Hamilton. At Mount Carmel Retreat Center, Niagara Falls, Ont. For info. call (416) 892-8059.

May 27 ABC Sale at Shalom Manor, Grimsby, Ont. Come and support your seniors!

Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta
invites applications for:

Development Education Coordinator

Responsibilities include working with Federation Locals to raise public awareness of, and encourage appropriate responses to global disparities in food production, distribution and trade; building relations with Two-Thirds World farmers; administering grant funding; assistance in production of development issue of Earthkeeping magazine.

Qualifications: Working familiarity with international and Canadian development issues, especially food and agriculture; good communication and volunteer development skills; ease in employing participatory education methods; commitment to forwarding the Federation’s goals and purposes.

Salary for half-time position commensurate with experience and CFFA’s salary grid. Job description available.

Please submit letter of application, resume and references by May 15, 1989 to: CFFA, Gus Polman, 10766 - 97 St., Edmonton, AB T5H 2M1 (403) 428-6981

Editor/Office Coordinator

Responsibilities include office management, coordinating Federation events and mailings; editing CFFA newsletter; and Earthkeeping magazine, co-published 5 times a year by the Christian Farmers Federations of Alberta and Ontario on issues of faith and agriculture to stimulate responsibility in the food system.

Qualifications: Journalistic sensitivities, proven ability to write clearly and easily and to exercise judgement under pressure; practiced organizational, editing, enabling skills; commitment to Federation goals and purposes; computer and publishing process familiarity desirable.

Salary for half-time position commensurate with experience and CFFA’s salary grid. Job description available.

Please submit letter of application, resume, references, and writing samples by May 15, 1989 to: CFFA, Gus Polman, 10766 - 97 St., Edmonton, AB T5H 2M1 (403) 428-6981

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Change in time of worship:
— First CRC, Toronto, will hold its Sunday evening worship services at 6 p.m. starting May 7, 1989

Classis Meeting
— Classis Niagara will meet in regular session on May 17, 1989, at 9 a.m., Covenant CRC, St. Catharines, Ont. Gerrit Veeneman, Stated Clerk.

Look
for
Vacation
issue
next
week

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Christian life

Assessing Francis Schaeffer

Reflections on Francis Schaeffer, edited by Ronald W. Ruegsegger. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1986. Paperback, 320 pp. Reviewed by Rev. Johan D. Tangelder, pastor of the East Christian Reformed Church, Strathroy, Ontario.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer, founder of the L'Abri Fellowship, author of at least 22 books, theologian, philosopher, lecturer and evangelist, died in 1984. He is sorely missed by many and his legacy continues to spread.

I had the privilege of meeting with Schaeffer at the North-West L'Abri Conference in Calgary, and also listened, in a Toronto church, to his introduction of his film series "How Then Should We Live?" Some years ago I spent three weeks at the Dutch L'Abri. The fellowship at that place was great and stimulating. Later, on the way to the Philippines in 1977, our family spent four weeks travelling through Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany. Our weekends were spent at the Dutch L'Abri so that we could attend its bilingual (Dutch-English) church services. We also had the opportunity to talk with L'Abri workers and guests.

Francis Schaeffer has made a great impact on the evangelical world. How history will judge him, time alone can tell. *Reflections on Francis Schaeffer* is one more attempt by evangelical scholars to analyze the man and his ministry. The writers aim to provide readers with a better understanding of Schaeffer's thought.

The essays in this book are arranged as follows: Part one investigates Schaeffer's thought by examining both its intellectual roots and

apologetic methodology. Part two examines his analysis of four key disciplines: philosophy, art, music and modern theology. Part three offers an evaluation of Schaeffer's critique of culture. It appraises his analysis of the history of Western civilization, examines his views on the United States, considers his statements about ethics and reviews his assessment of evangelicalism.

The editor rightly claims that the evaluation of Schaeffer in this book will not please everyone. It certainly did not please me. Readers are told that we must avoid the tendency to either accept or to reject completely what Schaeffer says. This is true. But I believe that the authors have been too critical, generally speaking. Perhaps a more appropriate title would have been "Critical Reflections on Francis Schaeffer." I offer my comments under four headings.

A generalist

Francis Schaeffer was a generalist in an age of specialists. He used broad strokes and popular language. He was an able communicator who possessed a gift of discernment that enabled him to articulate a great many truths. He was not a careful scholar. His broad-brush analysis sometimes led him to describe events or personal attitudes in a way that were factually inaccurate. He was a general practitioner with a heart burdened for the millions in spiritual darkness. He sought to present the Gospel to 20th century people, showing what it means "to believe it, to think it through, and to live it out."

In this book Schaeffer is severely criticized for his lack of in-depth scholarship. But the authors are not consistent

in their critique and expect too much of him. You can't specialize in every subject.

Evangelist and pastor

Schaeffer considered himself primarily an evangelist. He was more concerned about people than procedures. The exposure of basic presuppositions was central to his method of encounter with all opinions on any subject. As a pastor he had a positive influence on the average church person. He aimed to bring a clear, strong and honest Christian message and to demonstrate its cultural relevance and reality.

Schaeffer had a high view of the nature and authority of scripture. He considered a move away from a commitment to a verbally inspired, propositional revelation as a move away from the foundation that provides life's answers. He was sharply critical of non-inerrantist students of scripture. He pointed out that anything less than a position of full inerrancy would lead to a rejection of the authority of scripture.

Schaeffer spoke from a Reformed-evangelical perspective. He persuaded many Christians to adopt a positive attitude towards culture. In this way he was instrumental in bringing about the transformation of evangelicalism. The contributors to *Reflection* don't mention the strong impact in this area made by Dr. Hans Rookmaaker and the Dutch Calvinists; only passing references are made. But Schaeffer's works demonstrate how strongly influenced he was by Abraham Kuyper's thinking. In his book, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, Schaeffer refers to Kuyper's sphere sovereignty. And in line with Kuyper, he said that Christians are to act like Christians in every sphere of life. Everyone is always under the norms of scripture, whether in the classroom or at home.

Schaeffer often acknowledged his indebtedness to Rookmaaker, who was an art professor at the Free University of Amsterdam and director of the Dutch L'Abri. Schaeffer was a member of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy. He was also influenced by Dr. Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

The essays in *Reflection* provide the readers with timely material for an ongoing discussion on the many facets of Schaeffer's work. I highly recommend it to college and seminary students, teachers and pastors.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Praise

"... Praising God" (Acts 2:47)

The famous orchestra conductor Otto Klemperer was not known for giving praise easily. In fact, many thought he was a rather grumpy man. But one performance went so well, and the musicians outdid themselves with excellence, that he surprised them with an enthusiastic, "Good!"

Startled, but very pleased, the orchestra burst into spontaneous applause. But Klemperer's frown returned. "Not that good," he growled.

"Praise is always pleasing," said Montaigne. And Dr. Johnson echoed our inner thoughts when he said, "The applause of a single human being is of great consequence!" But we are not a race that offers compliments easily. "We criticize Virtue severely for her faults," says Balzac, "while we are full of indulgence for Vice!"

An old Jewish mystical writing sizes us up well. "What is the sign of a proud man?" it asks. We nod in embarrassment at the answer: "He never praises anyone!" Someone must have been thinking of that when he or she penned "The Grumblers' Song" we sang as children:

*In country, town, or city some people can be found
Who spend their lives in grumbling at everything around!
Oh, yes! they always grumble, no matter what you say,
For these are chronic grumblers, and they grumble night and day!*

But maybe we come by our grumbling honestly. Perhaps we know the sting in cheap praise. The conqueror Napoleon didn't let a compliment go to his head. "He who knows how to flatter also knows how to slander," he said. And listen to the modern American folk philosopher Eric Hoffer, from the docks of New York harbour: "There is probably an element of malice in our readiness to over-estimate people — we are, as it were, laying up for ourselves the pleasure of later cutting them down to size!"

And maybe we're tired of the flattery of salespeople who out-do Dale Carnegie in trying to "win friends and influence people." Several years ago we were window-shopping in a mall, and a clerk put on the praise: "What lovely daughters you have! Oh, I admire your taste in clothing! Here, try this on My, it was made just for you!" Despite our protests, he suggested we take several items home, "just to see how good they make you feel!" But his smiles turned into livid glares of open hostility when we returned what we neither wanted or needed.

"A flatterer is a man that tells you your opinion and not his own," said a wise man several centuries ago.

Overflowing joy

So why is praise such a key element of the Christian life? Why do the psalms call worship and adoration out of our lives? Why does the *Westminster Catechism* say that we were made to praise, that the "chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever!"?

C.S. Lewis asked himself that. He said that before he was a Christian, he found the praise of God a "stumbling block" that nearly prevented him from believing. After all, he said, "We despise the man who demands continued assurance of his own virtue, intelligence or delightfulness; we despise still more the crowd of people round every dictator, every millionaire, every celebrity, who gratify that demand." How could God command our praise, much less demand it? Wasn't he a bit egotistical and self-serving? Wouldn't our praise be flat notes of chanted incantations which try to wring magic out of power and brown-nose him into giving us our way?

Sure, says Lewis, except for one thing. When you fall in love, when you find a beauty that is outstanding, when you are struck by the glories of a moment or a person, the worst thing that can happen to you is silence! Can you imagine love without poetry, passion without music, beauty without watercolours and oils, kindness without words of expression? Then you are beginning to understand what has always moved Christians to adoration. Can you think of God and not worship? Can you remember Easter without celebration? Can you call to mind "Amazing Grace" without praise?

Flattery is manipulation. It destroys the faint spark of honest delight within us. But praise is the raging fire of joy. It is kindled by the wonder of divine Love. It is fanned beyond control by the surprise of Grace.

And the worst that can happen to it is silence.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

Save Canada's oldest Christian Reformed Church building

Join the effort to save Canada's oldest Christian Reformed church building! (See feature article, C.C., March 24, p. 5)

Originally in Nobleford, Alberta, this building will be preserved, it is hoped, in Prairie Acres, a turn-of-the-century historic village, two kilometres from Picture Butte, Alta.

But the church will escape demolition only if \$14,000 is raised by the April 30 deadline.

Please send your donation today, in whatever amount, to:
Prairie Tractor and Engine Society
Box 1954
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4K5

(PTES is a registered charity and will provide tax receipts.)